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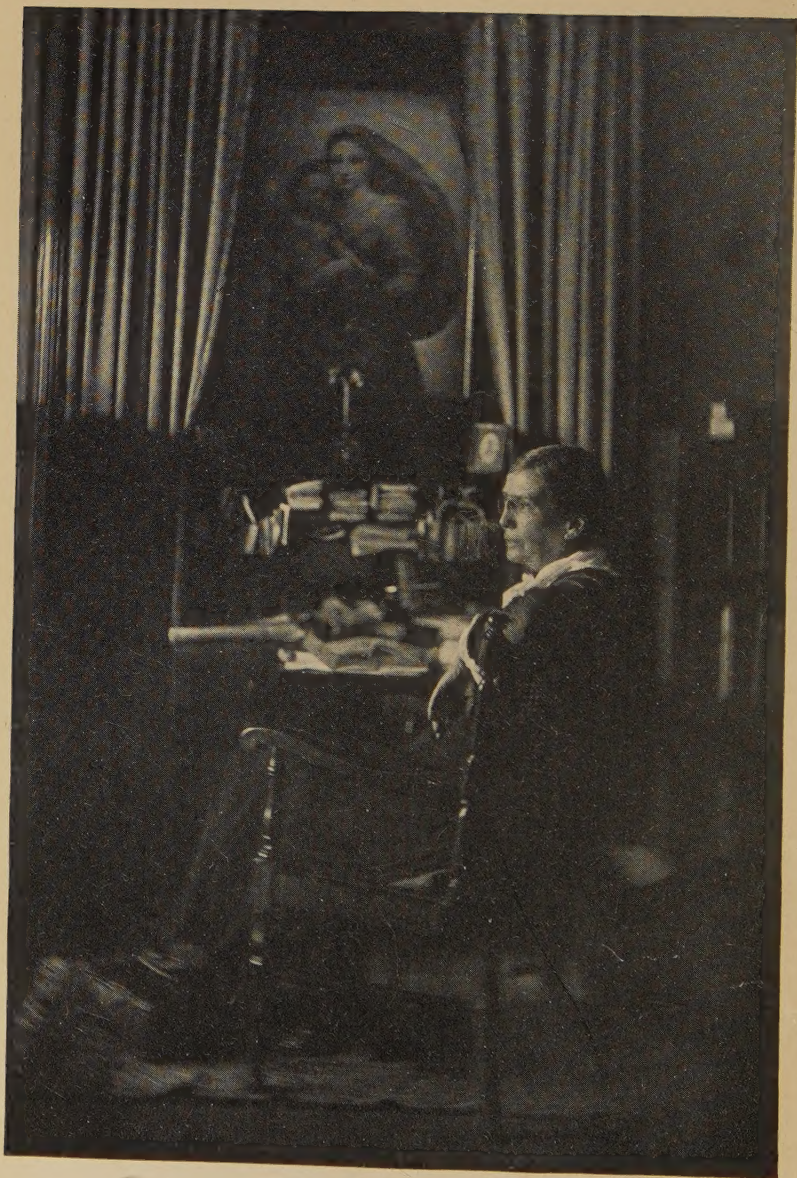
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Elizabeth Harrison—1916

SKETCHES ALONG LIFE'S ROAD

BY

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Elementary College, Chicago. Author of Study
of Child Nature, When Children Err,
Misunderstood Children, In Story-
land, Unseen Side of Child
Life, all internation-
ally known
books*

Edited by

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY



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"Men are said to be partial judges of themselves. Young men may be, I doubt if old men are. Life seems terribly foreshortened as they look back—and the mountains they set for themselves to climb in youth turn out to be mere spurs of immeasurably higher ranges when with failing breath they reach the top."

THOMAS HUXLEY.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

To

MY BELOVED ALUMNÆ DAUGHTERS

FOR WHOM IT WAS WRITTEN AND FOR THEIR
DAUGHTERS WHOM THEY HAVE TRAINED INTO
THE PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE IDEAL
UPON WHICH THEIR SCHOOL WAS FOUNDED;
NAMELY, TO TRULY LIVE IS TO SERVE. THE
MORE THOROUGH THE PREPARATION AND THE
CLEARER THE INSIGHT, THE GREATER
CAN BE THE SERVICE

THIS book was written to show, not only the progress that educational methods have made during my life time, but also to emphasize the importance of the teacher realizing the greatness of his or her work not merely as a pedagogue, but as a friend to each child under his or her influence.

The Author.

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Introduction

IN a period that lays emphasis upon materialism, we are discovering the power for inspiration in the biography; the experiences of individuals who made history become a lexicon by means of which we may translate the enigma of the present and envision the future through the telescope of the past. The history of education has given us few biographers. The teacher who leaves an imprint of character and the sense of power with her generation lives in the onmoving personalities of her pupils; she impresses her times vicariously through service and finishes her work with eyes too strained to measure the extent of her achievements.

Elizabeth Harrison's autobiography is the story of a great American teacher. She put her life into words because she submerged herself in an understanding of the significance of those trends in early childhood education which her insight and perseverance left us. The business of the editor is that of interpretation. Reading, assembling and projecting Miss Harrison's thoughts upon the plane of the gigantic educational field of today, I find that everything for which she gave her years has persisted; the value of cultural influence, development of the child's creative ability, recognition of the importance of the period of early childhood, a greater elasticity in the entire school system, the need of parental education—these are the values of progressive education today.

The following pages cover a life that extended from pioneering days in Kentucky to the founding of one of the most beautiful and modern institutions for teacher training in the world; from a child's wide-eyed interest in Bible stories to the writing of stories for children that found international recognition; from the sacrifice of home that was the lot of

every self-supporting young woman fifty years ago to the awakening of our sprawling, bewildered Chicago in its early days to the matchless cadences of Dante; from the beginnings of kindergarten education in America to the humanizing of the elementary school of today in line with the philosophy of Froebel; from the belief that mothers should be welcome in school to the membership in millions of the Parent-Teachers Association as it functions today. The background of this story of the growth of educational ideals during half a century is the life pattern of an unusual personality. Elizabeth Harrison taught herself whatever was new in her work, whether in this country or Europe. She taught little children through happiness. She hung the first picture in a Chicago public school. She taught thousands of young women to be progressive teachers. She taught the first groups of mothers in the face of opposition and misunderstanding. She established her theories in the United States Bureau of Education. She wrote an educational monograph that stirred nations.

The individual effort this life of teaching represents can hardly be appreciated today. Opposition from society, from the educational world, from the public had to be overcome. A woman on the lecture platform in Miss Harrison's early experience was, to say the least, a heroine; a woman lecturing in the cause of scientific motherhood was an object of ridicule until her intrepid spirit and unheard-of eloquence in the cause drew and persuaded large audiences.

Education is our concern as never before; its *verities* persist in our changed and changing civilization; they are our hope of future stability in peaceful living and uninterrupted progress. The teacher of young children today has had university training. She is familiar with the arts and sympathetic to culture. She travels during her vacations to broaden her vision and study schools in other environments. She believes that her work ranks as a science; that education is an organic process measured by the individual's heredity and the mould-

ing form of early environment. All this is so well understood as to be beyond comment, but Elizabeth Harrison was obliged to preach it in a day of bare schoolrooms, to teachers uneducated except in the use of a textbook, in the cause of misunderstood children. Everything for which she struggled has become a part of the educational pageant—recognition of the teaching profession, enrichment of the school program, better parenthood. A record of the trail-blazing Elizabeth Harrison's life represents gives new dignity to teaching and lights anew the torch of our educational wayfaring.

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.

SKETCHES ALONG LIFE'S ROAD

CHAPTER I

Ancestry and Early Environment

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES said, "To be well born, a child should begin by selecting his grandparents." I can go farther back than grandparents. Both my father's and mother's ancestry date back to English forefathers who settled in America before the Revolutionary War. My father's parents were pioneers, who traveled on horseback from Virginia to Kentucky in the days when Indian fighting was to be expected all along the way. I dimly remember some of my grandmother's thrilling stories of those early days. One in particular stands out distinctly. Her brother, Robert Ellis, was captured by the Indians and did not escape from them until thirteen years after the family had settled in Kentucky.

My mother's family was also from Virginia, though I believe her father, Judge Garland Bullock, traced his blood back to Georgia ancestors. My mother kept in her family Bible a yellow parchment paper on which were the records of the Hawkinses and the Thompsons, of her mother's genealogical tree. She was rather proud of her ancestors, though just what they did that counted for anything of especial value I do not know. I am sorry to say that these records have disappeared, and I have never hunted up relatives who could definitely re-state them. They were related

to me by a cousin. From another cousin, I afterwards received a communication asking me to join other heirs of John Hawkins of Roanoke, Virginia, in presenting a petition to Congress to reimburse the heirs of the aforesaid John Hawkins, who, during the winter of 1776-77, loaned George Washington five thousand dollars. He also stated that this fact had been recorded in Bancroft's history. I forget the large sum he said was due the heirs of John Hawkins because of the accumulated compound interest. I wrote him in reply that if it could be proved that I had an ancestor who had been of any assistance to George Washington in his darkest hour of suspense and anxiety, surely this would be sufficient honor to outweigh any pecuniary returns that might be considered.

My mother inherited from her father a substantial and beautifully located home overlooking the Ohio River, in Carroll County, Kentucky, and some rich farm land, where she continued to live the first nine years of her married life. My father was a dry-goods merchant in the town of Carrollton. In 1849 a crisis came in his business and the ancestral home, with its belongings, had to be sold. My parents, with their three children, moved to the small village of Athens. A few months later, on September 1, I was born in the midst of an epidemic of cholera that swept over the land. I have heard my mother tell of the anguish of those waiting months, during which she herself was stricken with the two older children and lay helpless between them, reaching out her hand now and then to touch their lips to see if they were still breathing. The household affairs had to be trusted to a young negro girl, who also had charge of my four-year-old brother, as there were no nurses or even untrained women to be had for love or money. In telling of this testing of her faith, my mother said that she prayed that her life might be spared for her children's sake. And she resolved that if she recovered, she would do whatever she could to help other mothers in need.

This vow she fulfilled, visiting the sick and ministering to them as soon as she was able to do so. I have sometimes wondered if my intense yearning love for mistreated children might not have begun while I lay all unconscious within her body. I am told that I bear a striking resemblance to her in form and feature. If she could so impress me with her bodily characteristics, why could she not also impress me with her emotional nature? However, this is a point for wiser heads than mine to decide.

A few months after my birth, my parents moved to Midway, Woodford County, Kentucky. At that time Midway was a town of some three thousand inhabitants, surrounded by one of the most attractive rural districts. The early Virginia pioneers who had settled Woodford County had been wise enough to preserve the beautiful oak, hickory and beech trees, and to build substantial homes. Lexington, the nearest large town, had good schools which created an atmosphere of culture not common in many parts of Kentucky in the first half of the nineteenth century. In these pleasant home surroundings I lived until I was seven years old. It was a care-free, happy life for us children. It was here that most of the out-of-door dramatic play, of which I shall tell later, took place.

But my father's financial venture was not a success, and the problems of school life for their growing family began to press heavily upon my parents, as there were no free schools in Midway at that time, and the private school which my older sister and brother attended was too expensive to include us younger children; therefore, in 1856, when my father was offered a large tract of raw land in and around Davenport, Iowa, he decided to accept it, and we migrated to the North.

Davenport was a much larger town than Midway, and our new home was surrounded by streets and other homes occupied by strangers, quite in contrast to friendly Midway, the

beautiful blue-grass region filled with well-tended orchards, green fields, and meadow lands. My father's new Davenport business, that of land agent, exactly suited him. Much of his time was spent riding around the open country, selling the recently settled farms or inspecting the, as yet, undeveloped prairies of the new state, and making friends with nearly everyone he met, oftentimes being imposed upon. He threw himself into this new western life with his accustomed buoyancy and energy, which never really left him. After he had passed his ninety-fifth birthday, I persuaded him to have his photograph taken. It was a fine picture, which anyone might judge to be the photograph of a hale, hearty man of about seventy. When the proof was shown him, he said:

"I don't like that picture; it makes me look like an old man."

He died lacking only six months of his one-hundredth birthday; and to the end he was never "an old man." Ten days before his death he came home from church and repeated much of the sermon to my sister, who had been detained at home. Within a week of his passing into the Beyond, he took his daily walk of a mile or more.

In his new business in Davenport he had his ups and downs, but nothing ever depressed him. If times were good, we lived lavishly. If times were bad, my mother economized; but at all times we set a lavish table, and at all times entertained friends and relatives for visits of any duration of time that they might choose.

With my mother, the case was different. She was a kindred-loving, home-keeping woman. Her mother had died when she was a young girl, and she had presided over the home of a stern, old father, who was judge of the Circuit Court of Carroll County. She was rather proud of her Virginia ancestry and held herself aloof from what she called "people with common manners." Wealth or lack of wealth made no difference in her estimation of them. She was kind and always



Elizabeth Bullock Harrison, at Fifty-six—
Mother of Elizabeth Harrison

helpful to the very poor and of a deeply religious nature, though she rarely if ever talked on the subject of religion to us. Our church duties were never allowed to grow slack. We were drilled in church catechism, but without comment or explanation of the same; our learning Bible verses, apparently, seemed to her to be a safeguard against corrupt manners and morals. Personally, I owe her a deep debt of gratitude for the passages of scripture which she selected for me to commit to memory, as they were the supreme utterances of the religious leaders of the world's most religious people, and I doubt not that they had much to do in forming my taste for good literature. Before I was nine years old, I committed to memory the first chapter of Genesis, the twentieth chapter of Exodus to the end of the ten commandments, the nineteenth, twenty-third, and one-hundred-ninth Psalm, the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and beginning at the first of the second chapter of St. Matthew to the end of the fifth chapter, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians and the twentieth chapter of Revelation—in all, less than two hundred verses; but these two hundred verses were a selection of such passages in the Old Testament as showed the supreme majesty and power of God as well as his sympathy with his chosen people in their affliction; and in the New Testament, the mystery of the coming of Christ, the purpose of his life, the obligation of man to keep his thoughts clean and his life full of loving kindness, and, finally, that mystical description of the glory of a future life, as yet far beyond human comprehension. Of course I could not have thus analyzed them at this early age, nor do I think my mother consciously planned this theological presentation; but it shows her instinctive love of the best that the religion of her day accepted.

Our new life in Davenport differed materially from our Midway life. Our out-door dramatic performances ceased, or, rather, were transferred to play with paper dolls in the bare, unfurnished room allowed us for a play-room. All activities

of our past and dreams of future life were enacted by our ever-enlarging community of paper dolls, almost exclusively furnished by *Godey's Lady's Book*. Many of the stories which we now began to read for ourselves were lived over in this doll world, and oh, the excitement and joy when our father one day brought home a merchant tailor's fashion plate! Up to that time we had been obliged to pretend that the fathers, brothers, and uncles were busy down-town.

The deep winter snows of this new climate were a ceaseless delight to us children, and we were allowed to enjoy all sports that the snow suggested. Snow-balling was an unending source of attraction and a most invigorating exercise for a motor-minded set of children; I think, as a whole, we would be classed under that head. The long hills of the town afforded excellent coasting exercise of the most daring kind. Our home stood on a hill which was five blocks long, and at the foot of it was a railway crossing. The long, swift descent of this hill and the quick turning to one side to avoid the railway track undoubtedly developed alertness of mind as well as increased circulation of the blood.

If I remember rightly, we had one of the first sets of croquet that were brought to Davenport. One of the beloved remembrances of my childhood is of our swing, fastened to a large, horizontal limb of a tall oak tree some twenty feet above the ground. The joy of "pumping" oneself in the air until the branches were touched on one side, and swinging back to the branches on the other side will never be forgotten. The coming of spring sent us tramping through the woods for wild flowers. From April till late in the fall, we were never without some kind of wholesome out-of-door exercise. Summer brought swimming lessons and boat rides on the Mississippi. With autumn came long hikes in search of hazel nuts and hickory nuts that abounded in the forests around us. I remember the glee with which we returned home with the bags of nuts on our backs.



Isaac Webb Harrison, at Fifty-eight—Father of Elizabeth Harrison

I do not recall when I first went to dancing school; but we had dancing lessons each fall and winter until we were grown. I feel sure that my sense of rhythm was thus developed, and this added to my enjoyment of music in later years. From this brief sketch of my childhood one can readily see how I gained the freedom of body with which I later took part in the games of the kindergarten. I entered into these games with almost as much enjoyment as did the children. When games are freely and genuinely played, I believe them to be the most valuable part of early child life.

As we travel about over the world, we find here and there a shrine erected in memory of some saint who lived long ago. I have been told that the sculptor sometimes suggests in his design the nature of the saint and the influence which the saint exerted. Similarly, as we travel along life's highway, it is a good thing now and then to stop and pay deference to those saintly characters enshrined in hearts that reflect their influence. Erected and kept sacred in the heart of a child, was a shrine described by only two words: "Aunt Ginny."

Aunt Ginny lived what is generally called the life of a slave, from the time of her birth until her death at the age of seventy-six. She was born on a Kentucky plantation twelve or fifteen years before my father came into the Virginia branch of the Harrison family, this special line of that branch having migrated, with its negro servants, to Kentucky. She was with my grandmother when my father was born; as soon as he was old enough to be carried about in the arms of a faithful servant, she was given charge of him, and for the rest of her long life, he was "Marse Ike" to her. When my grandmother gave up housekeeping, Aunt Ginny came to live with us. She ruled supreme in the kitchen and was chief ally to our mother in the not-easy task of training a group of headstrong, active youngsters in the dignity of manners and standards of morals which the family tradition demanded.

I do not remember that during my childhood I ever went

from home to take a meal with some friend or relative that Aunt Ginny did not give me the admonition to "'member to leave sumpin on your plate for manners." The long summer days, so full of play, were punctuated now and then with a call from the kitchen door: "Come right in here, chile, and git yo' bonnet on; you'll never be a far-skin lady if yo' don't war yo' bonnet."

I think she loved us, in her way, as devotedly as did our mother; only her standards were different. That we, the daughters of the house, should grow up courteous and attractive-looking and marry men of quality was all she asked of the Lord for us; and as to our brothers, the one idea she held before them was that they should grow up gentlemen and not let Mis' Liz ever be ashamed of them. I think this was part of her prayer every night. Old Aunt Lucy, who lived across the river with another Southern family, came twice a year to spend Sunday with her. After their sumptuous dinner, which my mother always saw was provided, they held a conference as to the respective prospects of the children of the two families. This was followed by their frequently audible prayer, beseeching the Lord to see to it that each one of the daughters of the two families should marry a man who was a gentleman and could take care of her. For all the sons of the two houses, the petition was that they should grow up an honor to the family name. So far as I can now recall, there was little or no selfish asking for ease or safety for themselves. It was their master's children for whom they were concerned. This sincere affection left its impress upon us children.

Aunt Ginny was a devoted Baptist. One of the first things my father did after we moved North, was to rent a seat for her in the Baptist church. When he found that there was no place for negro members, he arranged for an unoccupied side pew for her, where she sat alone. Our family attended a mission chapel near by, and always reached home before

Aunt Ginny did. One day in the spring of 1862 my brother George came running in exclaiming: "Aunt Ginny is coming home crying!" Our mother started at once to meet her and led her into the house without making inquiry as to the cause of her distress. It was such an unheard of thing for Aunt Ginny to cry that we children crowded around her, while she kept sobbing: "I ain' one, am I, Mis' Liz? I ain'! I ain'! Oh! Mis' Liz, you won't let them take me away from you and Marse Ike will you?" Then the sobbing would drown her words. My mother led her to her room and gently removed her bonnet and mantle, and sitting by her on the side of the bed, succeeded, little by little, in getting from her the cause of her excitement and distress. After the morning services one of the women of the congregation had come to our dear old Aunt Ginny and told her that she was no longer a slave, that she ought to leave our family and go to work for herself, as she was now a free negro. When she reached this climax, the weeping ceased and she broke into an indignant protest: "I ain't no *free* nigger, am I? I never stole in my life. Why did she call me a *free* nigger? Oh, Mis' Liz, you won't let them take me away from you, will you?" And the weeping, in which we children joined, began again, as our mother put her arms around the faithful creature, and drew the old turbaned head down upon her shoulder, and in soothing tones assured her that no one should take her away from us.

The next day, our father had an interview with the pastor of the Baptist church, and explained to him that Aunt Ginny had come North with us of her own free will, because she was devoted to our mother and loved us children, whom she had helped to bring up; that she had a comfortable room, and was treated with as much consideration as anyone could desire; and that she had lived as a family servant all her life, was now seventy years old, and could hardly be expected to go out to seek work among strangers. The pastor said that

he would do what he could to quiet the feeling which had been awakened by one or two members who insisted that the church was harboring a slave. Aunt Ginny was assured that she would not be disturbed again; but it was several weeks before our mother could persuade her to go to church, so great was her fear of being kidnapped and taken away from us.

I think it was about this time that I began to go into her room on Sundays when she did not go to church to read to her from the Bible. By and by, as advancing age kept her at home if the weather was unfavorable or her rheumatism was bad, these Sunday readings became an established habit. When I would ask her what chapter she wanted me to read, she usually said: "It's all the word of the Lord; but I think I would like to hear about the blowing of the trumpets and the falling of the walls of Jericho." I was only thirteen years of age when we began these Bible readings, and, naturally enough, I sometimes grew tired of reading about the fall of Jericho, and would say, "Let's read such and such a chapter." Aunt Ginny always thanked me when I had finished reading, but there was never that seeming absorption of mind indicated by the slight swaying of her body, as I read, and the satisfied nodding of her head as the climax of the story approached, which had accompanied the reading of the sixth chapter of Joshua. Just why this scene of slaughter and destruction should so fascinate her peace-loving heart, I never knew. Years afterwards, when I heard the Jubilee Singers interpret some of the old plantation hymns, I wondered if, at some impressionable period of her life, Aunt Ginny had not sung some hymn about the falling of the walls of Jericho, interpreted by the poetic soul of her race into a prophecy of their future freedom. It may, however, have been merely the rhythmic repetition of the words and the spectacular description of the downfall of the enemies of the Lord's chosen people that appealed to her; or it may have been the dramatic

play in which we children enacted the scene. Next to the fall of Jericho, her choice was the account of Daniel in the lion's den.

As time lessened Aunt Ginny's strength, my mother relieved her of the more taxing part of the work by engaging a laundress to do the washing and ironing and, later, the heavier scrubbing; but it had to be done tactfully, for she was jealous of her rights as the head of the kitchen department of our family life. She always spoke of it as "my kitchen." One warm day in the summer of 1873, Aunt Ginny stepped out of the kitchen door, bucket in hand, to draw some water from the cistern. My brother George, of whom she was always very fond, was in another part of the yard, and called a bit of nonsense, jestingly, to her. She stood for a moment laughing at his clever wit. Suddenly she dropped to the ground. George ran to her, thinking she had fallen and hurt herself. But the loving, faithful soul had departed. Her last act was one of service. Her last emotion was one of pleased admiration for one of "Marse Ike's children."

We buried her quietly in Oakdale Cemetery. The next spring my sister Lillie and I went out to see if her grave was being properly cared for. To our surprise, we found a yellow rose bush had been planted by the side of the grave, and was in bloom. The caretaker told us that George had brought it to the cemetery in the fall and planted it, giving him fifty cents to water it until it was well started, at the same time telling him that the bush was taken from one which grew near our kitchen door, and which Aunt Ginny always called hers. It was so like this reserved, warm-hearted brother to offer this silent tribute to his loyal, loving friend.

To this day, I never see a yellow rose that I do not think of Aunt Ginny, as saintly a character as ever dwelt in nunnery or convent.

CHAPTER II

My Invisible Friends

"MY first friend outside of the family was Lady Macbeth," writes Mrs. Henderson Daingerfield Norman in a charming article entitled "Mine Own Familiar Friend."¹ She then states that this strange choice, by a three-year-old child, of the untrustworthy hostess of King Duncan as an intimate was due to the fact that all the grown-ups of the family—father, mother, grandfather, two aunts, an uncle and a cousin—belonged to the Shakespeare Club in the little Virginia town in which her childhood was spent; perhaps I should say, where the years of her childhood were richly invested, for the next paragraph gives us a glimpse of the cultural atmosphere of that home life.

"To this day I have never known a club I have liked so much; its single purpose was to bring together a few congenial people to whom Shakespeare was at once daily bread and festal wine, and who, meeting fortnightly, read a play aloud by parts assigned beforehand. Naturally the grown people read the Shakespeare Club play more than once before the meeting; and so it chanced that in the winter I was three, going on four, Lady Macbeth became my friend." Mrs. Norman gives several reasons for this choice. One is that Lady Macbeth had such an interesting way of washing her hands and such a hard time getting the dirt off. Another is that Lady MacBeth evidently liked the witches; they talked in such a delightful jingle.

Mrs. Norman's sketch of the literary world, which she entered at the early age of three, carried me swiftly back to my own childhood when I was "five going on six." I espe-

¹*The Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1922.

cially recall one gloomy winter day when I was sitting at my mother's feet playing with my doll. My mother was sewing and Cousin Sallie was reading aloud one of Shakespeare's plays. As I recall those long-ago years, it seems to me that my mother was always sewing and Cousin Sallie was always reading aloud; or Cousin Sallie was sewing and my mother was reading aloud. There were five children and the negro servants to be clothed, and at that time all garments were made by hand. Sewing machines came into our family later. Of course, there was much reading aloud that did not interest me. Walter Scott was at his zenith at that time; Dickens and Thackeray were coming rapidly to the front, and a number of other mid-Victorian stars, of whom I knew little and cared less. But Shakespeare seemed to be the favorite in our household; at least I remember more distinctly Cousin Sallie's dramatic way of reading the plays.

On this particular day, she must have been reading *Henry IV*, or *Henry V*, as I recall dimly that there was a king or a prince who did some of the talking. These, however, were of minor importance, as I was accustomed to kings and princes in fairy tales. The adorable character who filled me with delight was Sir John Falstaff. At the time I had no prejudice one way or the other concerning the morals of this new hero. What so entranced me was the way in which Cousin Sallie changed her voice to that of a big, burly man whenever Sir John spoke. I recall my mother smiling at the swagger way in which Cousin Sallie played the part of "Old Sir John," then saying to her, "Sallie, stop your nonsense and read on." I remember Cousin Sallie replying, "How can I read it any other way? That is the way he talks." Then they both laughed, and I resolved that I would read that story just as soon as I could. My heart had begun hungering for more knowledge, all unconscious of the fact that hunger of this kind would never cease. I did not go to school till I was eight years old, but I cannot remember when I learned to read.

I soon drifted off into my own private world and planned how nice it would be to have this big, funny Falstaff man come and live with us. I resolved that as soon as I could write well enough, I would send him a letter and invite him to come and make us a visit. Then, perhaps, he would like us well enough to come and live in our house. We always had room enough for one more guest. I did not understand the plot; nor was I conscious of the beauty and variety of Shakespeare's language. It was the dramatic reading that I enjoyed.

I can hardly call this my introduction to literature. It might better be called my entrance into the world of the drama; for although I first made the acquaintance of these characters through books, they soon became real people, living and acting in new ways which my imagination devised. Would you say that all this is far beyond a six-year-old child, and that it would have been better had I been committing *Mother Goose* to memory rather than listening to the reading of Shakespeare's plays? Perhaps so. Perhaps not. It has yet to be proved that the modern pedagogical method of dramatizing *Mother Goose*, as practiced in some kindergartens and elementary grades, contributes more to the child's development than a home atmosphere of good manners, good music, and good books. When I was eleven years old, this same Cousin Sallie found me with my mother's calfskin volume of *Shakespeare's Complete Works* in my lap, weeping over the play of *Hamlet*, which I had just finished with sufficient comprehension to feel the tragedy of it. She took the book from me, scolding me for having taken it out of the book-case, and sent me out in the yard to play. Then and there I resolved that, some day, I would myself own a volume of Shakespeare. However, I was not a morbid child and soon I was in the swing, soaring high up among the branches of the big oak tree.

Later, I remember a painful dental operation which had to be performed. My father went with me and, fearing a scene

in the dentist's office, he promised me two dollars provided I would not cry when the tooth was pulled. I thought of a deep longing which that two dollars would satisfy, and I heroically endured the operation. As soon as I recovered from the shock of the extraction of the tooth, I demanded my money and hurried downstairs and over to the book store, where I bought the lovely, blue and gold, two-dollar copy of Shakespeare which I had long known was there. How I rejoiced that I had it to possess as my very own. Ah! the joy of it! I fairly hugged it to my bosom. I would gladly have endured twice the pain for the feeling of ownership which this chunky, little book gave me. In time it became, truly, my intimate friend. I think it is somewhere among my possessions yet; although as I grew older, I learned that it was better to forego blue and gold bindings and choose better print. I now possess a whole row of friendly authors who have told me how much they think of Shakespeare and what they value most in his writings. I have seen every great Shakespearean actor who has been on the American stage, beginning when Edwin Booth was the star of the theatrical world. Gradually, Hamlet and Lear, Macbeth and Cæsar, Juliet and Rosalind, Portia and others of those immortal creations of the master's mind became as familiar acquaintances to me as were some of our neighbors. Many of them became my personal friends, teaching me much concerning human nature.

These Shakespeare people, however, were not my only distinguished friends. I had others whom I shared with my brothers and sisters. My oldest sister, Mary Russell—called Mollie for short—attended a private school where one of the studies then considered proper for a young girl just passing through the bewildering perplexities of adolescence was Agnes Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*. As there was no direct contact between these famous but somewhat unhappy queens and a happy thirteen-year-old child in

a small Kentucky town, the only thing to do was to create a connection by means of the imagination. So a select variety of these queens was dramatized and quite eagerly and earnestly acted by us children with the re-enforcement of one or two other children of the neighborhood. This same sister was, of course, always the queen, as she knew the stories better than did the rest of us. She used the slanting cellar door or the top step of the back porch for her throne. But we were all instructed by her how to play the parts of lords and ladies of high degree. Whatever part we played, we were rigidly trained to address her as "Your Majesty," and to make a low bow when we came into her presence. The stateliest and most dignified language we could invent was used in our conversation. The foreign ambassadors used many gestures and made low bows. They had to speak in a foreign language; so we were drilled in dog-Latin which stood, with us, for the French and Spanish languages. Just where France and Spain were I knew not; neither did I know where Fairyland was; nor did I know much about Heaven, where little Tommie had gone to play with the angels, so I did not bother over the locations of these foreign countries.

This was my introduction to history, and this may be why I have always preferred reading the biographies of the great men of any era rather than the general history of the period. Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," early became the poem *par excellence* of my childhood, and when I was a little older, I gloried in Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*. Later, when I realized that one was a plea for democracy and the other for aristocracy, I had to choose between the two.

In these improvised dramas, our sympathy was always keenly aroused when we came to the story of Queen Eleanor's cruel treatment of the Fair Rosamond Clifford, whose hidden bower she found by attaching a silken thread to the king's spur when he rode away, unsuspecting, to visit the

lovely Rosamond. I was only seven years old at the time, and I had no idea of any moral problems involved in the story. In fact, I do not think any of us had, as the subject of illicit love was not discussed before children in those mid-Victorian days. Our interest centered in the contrast between the lovely Rosamond and the cruel queen. I have wondered, since, if my story of little Avilla carrying the line of golden light around the world, might not be traced back to the silken thread fastened to the king's spur.

Greater dramatic enthusiasm developed, however, when we came to the story of Queen Elizabeth. How our hearts thrilled when George, as Sir Walter Raleigh, stepped forth and spread his cloak across an imaginary puddle of mud in order that his queen's dainty shoes need not be soiled. Dear, lovable Brother George! No wonder he acted his part so well. This same high-minded chivalry was always in his heart. It shone forth so beautifully when, as a full-grown woman, I came to a crisis in my life.

However, our closest intimacies with the Great were with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with Joseph, Moses, and David; with Daniel, Elijah, and Nehemiah. Of these, Moses was my special friend. He had lived in palaces with kings and princes; yet he had given up all that splendor to help his old mother and father and their relatives. He had stretched out his arm and the waters of the sea had divided at his command, and he had talked face to face with God! It was all so extraordinary, so wonderful! I often planned the long talks I would have with him when I got to Heaven, the questions I would ask him and how I would have him retell some of his amazing experiences. There was never any doubt in my mind as to the friendship between us.

Elijah stood next in my hero list. I never grew tired of his brave daring of the priests of Baal to test the power of their gods against that of Jehovah. Then the terrific wind storm

which broke the rocks in pieces! and the earthquake! and the fire! I was not the least afraid of any of them because I knew that God was going to save Elijah. Even to this day I have an exultant feeling whenever I witness the coming of a storm with the slow gathering of dark heavy clouds and the mutterings of distant thunder and startling flashes of lightning. At such times, not infrequently, the vivid picture of the lonely Elijah on the mountain top arises before me. I loved to picture him, in my childhood, waiting for God to speak to him. Then came *the still small voice* of God, whispering to him so softly that no one but Elijah could hear this voice of Jehovah. Then that marvelous chariot of fire which took Elijah straight up to Heaven! What could be a finer reward for such a brave, true life? In all literature I know of nothing that compares with this dramatic story in its power to awaken a sympathetic child to the meaning of conscience. I have used it again and again with children.

Daniel was my next best friend. He, too, had such wonderful experiences. The year I was nine I resolved not to eat any fried food and to do without butter, of which I was very fond, not because our family physician had advised that I be given less rich diet, but because I thought it made me more like Daniel. And I planned that, some day, I would tell him that I knew how hard it must have been for him to do without cake and preserves and other nice things that were on the table of the wicked king of Babylon. I was less intimate with the other Bible heroes. But they seemed all great men, and I was very fond of them and admired their ways of doing big things for their "kinfolks." The old Hebrew writers were the finest story-tellers that the world has ever known. Their tales of their heroes are so poignant and personal; they deal with the elemental instincts of fear and love and courage and unwavering faith in God in such a vital way that they go straight to the child heart, much more directly, I

think, than do the subtle Greek stories. Whether or not my mother had this conception of them, I never knew. She was a rather reserved woman and did not talk much about religion to us. But she read these Bible stories aloud until we knew them as we knew no other stories.

Of course, we dramatized some of them. We were especially fond of the story of the fall of Jericho. We would form in line and march to the river Jordan, McCabe's Branch, and, at the command of Joshua, Mary Russell, take off our shoes and stockings and wade across. Then we would march through the land beyond the Jordan, Hamilton's corn field, till we came to the city of Jericho, a dilapidated and deserted old barn. There, in solemn state, we would march seven times around the "walls of Jericho," beating our tin pans and broken dishes. We were cautioned not to make any noise with our mouths—"nor to let any word proceed out of the mouth." This was the preparation for the grand climax. Then, when the signal was given, the shoutings and rejoicings were loud and long. Hiram, the half-grown negro house-boy, could shout louder and longer than any of the rest of us; so he was always a welcome assistant. I do not recall any of the grown-ups taking the least notice of these dramatizations of Bible stories, which were acted without the least feeling of irreverence on our part. We knew that God was great and good beyond all words. But these men and women were human beings, like our father and mother and uncles and aunts; so we did not hesitate to reproduce them in our play. As a result of these childhood plays, I found in after years that I had unconsciously gained a dramatic power of expression which became a part of myself in my platform lectures.

Of course, we learned the words of our catechism, never attempting to understand them, and we committed to memory certain portions of the Bible each week, went to Sunday-school and attended church services, and our mother,

usually, read all Sunday afternoon to us. This was her way of showing us how to keep the day holy. It was, I think, these Old Testament stories that helped to mold my character and settle my ideas of duty to God and man. The significance of the sublime story of Jesus Christ did not come to me till my adolescent period. I know that this is contrary to much of modern child-study. But as a group of children of average normality, we sat spell-bound Sunday after Sunday, listening to these stories of the trials and struggles, the triumphs and victories of the heroes of the world's most religious people. In them, God was always on the side of right.

Thus, through literature, sacred and secular, I gradually absorbed an appreciation of how some of the great souls of the past had lived and acted. In my own secret thought-world I dwelt among kings and queens, prophets and priests, saints and valiant knights, with genii who performed huge tasks that ordinary men dared not undertake, and with fairies, who, all unseen, did kindly deeds for the poor and imprisoned. So when the time came for me to go out into the work-a-day world, I went high-heartedly, expecting to meet queenly and kingly courtesy, to listen to the wisdom of prophets and priests, and to find giants and genii to help me if my burden grew too heavy. I felt sure these beings would come to me. It all came true. I had, I admit, many a discouraged hour and some lonely days; yet I never met a seemingly insurmountable obstacle but somehow somebody appeared on the scene and helped me either to remove the obstacle or see the wisdom of going around it. And I felt it was God who sent all these helpers, as he had sent them to my Bible heroes. I repeat, all this may seem contrary to modern pedagogy, but it is the story of my life that I am writing, and of an appreciation, which these childhood experiences brought me, of the value of acquiring character through people in the book-world and in the real world around us.

I did not begin school until I was eight years of age, and I graduated before I was seventeen. Most of my teachers, as I now recall them, were pleasant, well-mannered people. But I recall only one teacher who inspired me toward larger views of life, at the same time requiring of me the technical tasks of that day. All other teaching was from the appointed textbook lessons to be learned and recited.

If we memorized the text well, we were marked "A"; if poorly, we were marked "B," "C," "D," according to the standard of the teacher. There were no supplementary readers given to us; no research work was required. Any expression of personal opinion was seldom allowed in class-room. Let me here state that there were no training schools in the Middle West for teachers. I do not mean to imply that my teachers were not, in their way, good men and women; but in that day any such thing as a science of pedagogy was unknown. I speak of this here, in order that you of a younger generation may realize the progress in education which I have witnessed and in which I have gladly taken part, and that you may better understand the inspiration with which much of my life has been filled; for, among all the sources of inspiration, there is none equal to the consciousness of being a part, even a small part, of a great forward movement of humanity.

I think it must have been inborn hunger for knowledge that carried us through the drill and grind of our school work; even in the high-school it was the same. I went through four years of Latin, and was marked "A" in most of the work; but it was years later before I discovered that it was Julius Cæsar who wrote the commentaries on the Gallic War. We translated Cicero's *Orations* without being told that Cicero was Rome's greatest orator, nor was Sallust treated with any greater respect. I translated six books of Virgil's *Æneid* and was often pleased with certain passages in the

poem. I remember being deeply touched by Dido's fate. I doubt not that my vocabulary was enlarged by my search through the Latin dictionary for the right word; but there was not a suggestion that the *Æneid* was the great master poem of the whole thousand years of the Roman era. We were merely told that these books were "Roman classics" which we were required to translate.

The study of history was somewhat more interesting, as my mother was fond of it and we had some historical books in our library at home; it was not, however, until I stumbled upon an old leather-bound volume of *Plutarch's Lives* that I began to realize the importance of some knowledge of the history of past nations before one could have any genuine comprehension of the present and begin to understand how slow must be the growth of great ideals.

I "passed through" algebra, geometry, and trigonometry creditably; but today I am grateful that I can repeat the multiplication table and that I do not make too many mistakes in my checking account. Geography was aided somewhat by maps which hung on the schoolroom wall, but our lessons were largely a matter of memorizing. We were required to bound the states of America, tell the principal rivers that flowed through them, and name their capitals. Our textbooks contained a few pictures of the physical environment; but there was no suggestion of the extent to which this physical environment helped or hindered the progress of civilization. There was no hint of a great pioneer migration to the Northwest of our country, nor of that interesting comingling of the Anglo-Saxon and Latin races which peopled the South.

Going to school was simply a duty that must be performed like the hanging up of my clothes or the making up of my bed. My mother read aloud to the entire family Kane's *Arctic Explorations* as it came out week by week; but I in no way



"Our Class," 1866 Alice French (Octave Thanet) Florence
 Bennett, Maggie Davies, Marie Baker, Betty Harrison—*Center*
of the Group, Bell Bennett, ~~Kate~~ Tiffany (Mrs O
 W. Richardson), Frank Balch

connected it with my geography lessons in school. I recall even now the shame and humiliation I suffered for trying to connect the bounding of Persia and Arabia with the bounding of the country of the *Arabian Nights* tales. I expected to stop school when I grew up, but school had no connection in my mind with future years. I enjoyed school days, in a way, partly because school gave me opportunities for a companionship with more children, and partly because I liked this or that teacher.

One teacher, in the last two years of my high-school course, stands distinct as one to whom teaching was a joy. This instructor was our science teacher. I shall never forget how he came into his class-room one morning with a beaming smile and exclaimed: "I have a most wonderful thing to tell you this morning. It will change the whole course of all science and will help you to realize what a marvelous thing God's creation is." He then told us of an article he had read the evening before, concerning the new discovery having to do with the correlation and conservation of the forces of heat, light, and motion. For days we dwelt upon this subject, until our eyes were filled with wonder and our hearts with hunger for more knowledge of the universe. It seemed to me, as I listened, that we were going to be able to understand, with our finite minds, the mystery and majesty of the Infinite Creator;² and I decided that I would hold my father to his promise to let me go to college.

It is to this teacher, James Hamlin, that I owe my lasting interest in the marvelous progress which science has made and is still making. I did not realize at that time the great value this awakening of interest in science would be to me in my future life work. At times, when I have grown weary of the necessary reading of reports and reprints of new theories in pedagogy, or of details concerning new methods recommended by this or that prominent educator, I have found rest by turn-

²Dr. Lyman Abbott: *Religion of an Evolutionist*, page 103.

ing to some book on science, not too technically expressed, and I have always returned to my pedagogical studies refreshed and eager to help in every way that I could the young lives with which it has been my good fortune to be surrounded.

Years later I came across the following definition of a teacher: "Our colleges often make mistakes; they look for great scholars; but a great scholar is often not a great teacher. To be a great teacher one must not only have great thoughts, but great sympathy with men who have not these thoughts; he must know how to come down out of himself to the pupils before him, come in touch with them, and pour out of his abundance into their vacuity."^a

It was, no less, the study of the giant forces of nature, rather disconnectedly made, that first awoke in me the meaning of the old myths of the early race concerning giants, genii, and demi-gods, and created in me my desire to re-tell these stories of power beyond the ken of man, and to clothe them in more modern form, that they might again feed the imagination of the children of our day.

Not long ago a friend of mine was complaining of a lack of inspiring companionship and how this lack led her into petty views of life. I said, "Think of Dante, a poverty-stricken man, separated from his family and exiled from his beloved Florence." "Ah well," she interrupted, "if I had such a friend as Virgil, I too could rise above my narrow view of life." "There is no reason why you should not have Virgil for your friend; there were twelve hundred years between Virgil and Dante," I replied. "Six hundred years more need not be an obstacle. Old Homer and I are firm friends."

If one catches the thrill which compels the true artist to put his emotions into book form, then the author becomes one's friend in the real sense of the word. I have gone into my library many an evening, disturbed with the insignificant

^aRead Edward Yeoman's *Shackled Youth* and get another definition of a great teacher. See also *The Teacher* by George Herbert Palmer.

annoyances of the day, and have taken down Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* and for an hour or more have been rested and refreshed as this great general, mighty emperor, and profound philosopher talked with his own soul.

How much more Italy means to one who has read Duruy's *History of Rome*. That ugly gap in the old Roman wall becomes a shrine, when Thayer has persuaded Cavour to become one's traveling companion. London is only half London to us Americans if Dickens has not already introduced us to its by-ways. Twice, no three times, I have called William De Morgan back to tell me once again the story of Joseph Vance's life. I owe much to Margaret Deland for introducing me to dear old Doctor Lavender.

Sometimes when I have been compelled to travel miles of dry-as-dust statistics in order to verify certain facts, how glad I have been to enter Robert Louis Stevenson's *Garden of Verse*, and with childlike joy climb with the little boy to the high branches of the tree and gaze upon "Foreign Lands," or chase my funny shadow, or sail my boat on the counterpane sea. Or perhaps it was Tagore, who would restore my delight in the child-world with his magic charm. Once when the narrow confines of the sick room seemed like prison walls, I slipped off with William Beebe and wandered, amazed and delighted, through the jungles of British Guiana.

Years have vanished; yet with the delight of youth I watch with John Burroughs the slow drifting down of the snow flakes that herald the coming snow storm which soon lashes itself into a tempestuous fury, then slowly and softly dies away, leaving the landscape a world of whiteness and beauty. Ah, what keen enjoyment is added to an ocean voyage, with John Van Dyke as one's companion when crossing "The Opal Sea"! There are Ruskin's "Clouds" and "Star King's Mountains," John Van Dyke's "Desert," and John Burrough's rich gift of nature's treasury, and best of all perhaps,

the old Psalmist—all of them have been my friends since childhood. There are scores of others who have given me their eyes with which to see nature's beauty and their hearts with which to love more fully her grace of line and form. To all of these I owe a great debt of gratitude.

When I think what a company of the elect of the earth there is, even in my small library, I realize that Sydney Lanier was right when he said, "The writings of the wise are the only riches that our posterity cannot squander."

mained apparently the same that it had been for fifty years or more. So far as I can now recall, there was no hint of the mighty change which was impending; nor did there seem to be any realization of the tremendous struggle which was then raging between the North and the South. I presume my cousin and her husband knew of it, but being staunch Southerners they had no fear as to the final victory of states rights.

As for the negroes, they had grown up on the place, and their master, like his father before him, was an easy-going, good-natured man, who did not demand strenuous labor. They had always an abundance of food and what they called comfortable cabins. I do not think any of them could read, and, so far as I can now recall, there had been no northern agitation in that section of the state. My cousin's home was fifteen miles from the railroad, and some of his neighbors were twenty miles from the post office. "The House," a name always given to the building in which the white people lived, was a big log cabin with an attic reached by a ladder. The main floor was divided into two big rooms; the larger of the two, which was called "Miss Sallie's room," was spacious and hospitable, notwithstanding the fact that it contained a wide, four-poster bed, a bureau, a chest of drawers, a long dining table, a dozen or more chairs, a settee, a trunk, a medicine cabinet, and an old-fashioned secretary with book shelves. It was warmed by a wide built-in fireplace, big enough for logs the size of a man's body. The house stood on the top of a slight elevation, thus giving a fine view of the surrounding country. Half-way down the path that led to the servants' quarters, stood the milk house and the smoke-house and the brick oven, in which was baked all the wheat bread. The corn bread, the hoe-cakes, and the batter cakes were all cooked in the kitchen, which stood at the foot of the hill. A number of one- and two-room cabins clustered around the kitchen. In them lived the house servants and the farm servants and their families; a little farther away were the



Elizabeth Morrison and Eliza Susan L. 1888

barns, the stables, and the cow sheds, and one or two non-descript buildings.

Imagine, if you can, the wastefulness, both of human labor and financial income. My cousin's husband was not considered a rich man, and when the crisis came, he found himself in such straitened circumstances that he sold his farm for about a fourth of what it was worth, and came north and rented a farm near Davenport. But he was almost as helpless in practical farming as he was in financing. He was not lazy, but he was simply ignorant of what real work meant. He and his wife struggled along for two or three years; then Cousin Sallie died, and he drifted back to Missouri.

I have related this experience, partly because it widened my narrow town-view of life, and partly because it is a picture of much of the South before the Civil War and just after it, thus proving to any thoughtful mind that slavery was as much a curse to the master as it was to the slave. At the time, I knew nothing of what all this meant. I was a dreamy, thirteen-year-old child and may have missed observing any evidences of anxiety and unrest. I had a free, happy summer, and returned home having grown perceptibly in height and gained several pounds in weight. I was eager and in excellent condition for that difficult first year in high school that lay just ahead of me.

I worked hard and steadily all through my high-school course, oftentimes beyond my bodily strength. At the close of my senior year I stood one hundred per cent in all of my studies, the only member of the class who did, although there were two classmates ahead of me in native ability; thus I fulfilled the conditions on which I was promised college. However, when the time came for me to prepare for college, again the folly of my over-work manifested itself, and my mother, backed by the doctor, decided that my college course must be deferred a year. But the next year my father had certain financial losses, not serious, but enough to make him

feel that the college expenses must again be postponed. I gradually relinquished the idea, hard as it was to do so, and threw myself into the life about me, although I laid out a course of study for myself and clung to it.

The gay whirl of social life took much of my time and strength. We had card parties and evening dances, skating engagements and sleigh rides, tableaux and fancy-dress parties, and suppers for our public-library fund in winter; picnics, boat rides, and church festivals in summer. Our home was one of the social centers of the town. We entertained with the lavish hospitality of the South.

I enjoyed it all with the zest of gay and happy girlhood, without any thought of the value of economic resources. We had an account at the best dry-goods store, the fashionable millinery store, and a high-priced shoe store. Our mother did most of the buying and our father paid the bills. Once in a while he fussed a little about this or that bill, but they were all paid promptly, twice a year; that was part of his code of honor. We daughters knew nothing about financial worries. In fact, I do not recall ever having heard the word thrift used, or ever having known of the wisdom of saving for a rainy day. When our mother thought a hat or a coat too expensive, we did without it and did not fret, but enjoyed ourselves in some other way. As we made most of our own dresses, we frequently "turned" one, and in that way, made it serve in the place of a new one. Our father and mother's wedding anniversary was always celebrated as a festival, as were all our birthdays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and the New Year. These family holidays have remained with me as bright, pleasant memories.

As the town grew, a Young Men's Christian Association was established, and the president of the association persuaded, or convinced our mother that she could be of great aid to the new organization if she would send her three lively daughters down to help entertain on reception nights. This

was somewhat of a bore to us, but we went. In time we learned that many a shabby-coated boy had good sense, even if he could not dance. I look back upon this as very valuable training. It taught us to find out what interested others and to adjust ourselves to the social order when it was right that we should do so. It taught me how to commingle with many kinds of people, and, later, as a teacher, how to relieve a shy student of embarrassment.

When the stern reality of having to face the world and earn my own living came, I was at first appalled, almost paralyzed. When I found how much I lacked in definite, intellectual training, notwithstanding my wide reading, I frequently looked back upon those happy, care-free, wasted years with keen regret. Still later, when strenuous work had smoothed out some of the rough places in my road, I realized that my social training was, after all, a valuable asset, as it had taught me to adjust myself quickly to varied social conditions and had helped to give me that understanding of human nature which brings the joy of teaching.

The great inscrutable messenger, who, uninvited, sooner or later visits all homes, entered our family circle December 6, 1875, and took from us our mother, the center of all our home life. She was ill only a few days; there was barely time to send for my two sisters and their husbands and my brother George, who was away on a business trip. She was calmly conscious that her life on earth was ending. After giving each one of us a word of cheer and a farewell message, she lay very still for a time, almost as if asleep; then, suddenly, a luminous radiance lighted her face, her eyes opened with a far-off gaze in them, she reached out her arms and in a tone of great joy, exclaimed, "Oh, Mother!" Her arms dropped, her body relaxed, the light receded from her face, and she seemed unconscious of her earthly surroundings. In a short time all that was left to us was the precious memory of her beautiful life. Whether this last manifestation of life was a subconscious

memory of the past rising into consciousness or a super-conscious vision of the future, I know not. But it has always been a great comfort to me that she died in peace.

My mother had been the key-note in my father's life. I do not recall his ever entering the home after the day's business, that he did not at once ask the question, "Where is your mother?" if she happened not to be in sight. He usually passed from room to room until he found her; not that there was always something special he wanted to say to her, but that he seemed to feel the need of her presence. They were not a demonstrative couple, but he always paid this tribute to her. After her death the home was never real to him. I did what I could to make it still homelike, and my sisters came often with their children for visits of more or less extended periods. But it was useless. He was restless and unhappy. Everything in the home reminded him of her. My brothers made business arrangements that took them away from Davenport. The family, as a family, no longer needed a home.

After several long talks, father and I decided that a change of surroundings might help him; so we concluded to rent the house, ready furnished, for the winter. He decided to go to one of the down-town hotels, and I was left free to choose what I should best do. I had several invitations to spend the winter with this or that friend. But naturally my heart turned toward my sisters, both of whom lived in Marshalltown, Iowa, and in whose homes I knew I would be welcome. Davenport had been my home for twenty years. Most of my conscious life had been spent there. I had learned to love every hilltop view of the majestic Mississippi, every grove of unmarred oak and hickory tree, and every place where wild flowers grew. My church, my social club, the public-library group, of which I was a member, in fact, all—or almost all—of my friends were there. But for many reasons it seemed best to try at least the experiment of giving up the home. My father insisted that it was a temporary arrangement, and that

we could, if we wished, return in the spring; but deep down in my heart I knew that it was the breaking up of the old life. Why should I try to keep him in a home that was empty—filled only with recollections of his life comrade? I assented with a seeming willingness to his plans and went to my sister Mollie for the allotted time, knowing that a new mode of life lay before me.

Not long after my mother's death a new sorrow came into my life. It embodied the story of the wrecked life of a generous soul, but has no place in these sketches save that, for a time, it drove me into the dark world where dwells despair. Perhaps I can give some idea of the influence it had upon me by reproducing a part of an old and faded letter which was returned to me after the death of the individual to whom, fifteen years before, it had been written. The letter itself is dated some ten years after the experience related in it, and the writing of it was evoked by the sorrow of a dear friend from whom death had taken the being she most loved. It comforted her somewhat, and this is my reason for giving it here.

Dear Cousin:

Your sorrow-burdened letter has just been read, and I am stunned by its contents. If I could come to you, I might be of some little comfort. But how can one put upon paper the love and sympathy that yearn to help at such a time. How well I know the desolate loneliness, the terrible heartache, as one faces the unaccountable, the unexplained law of death. We know that the days must come and go. You must again take up your work. Life will compel you to mingle with people who neither know your loss nor care for your sorrow.

This is your first meeting with the great mystery of death. Along with your loss there seem to have come floods of doubt and fear and many questions which bring no answer save that awful silence which overwhelms the soul, when one

word, one little glimpse into the life beyond, would mean so much.

By and by, when you are stronger and we can be together, we will talk concerning the meaning of life and the mystery of immortality; for, my dear cousin, I have been down in the depths, down so deep that my heart has cried out, "Fool, how do you know there is a God? What do you know about life hereafter? If there be a God, why must I suffer so? Why cannot my prayers be answered? All I ask for is light to guide me into what is right for me to do. And no answer comes." I have walked the floor far into the night hours in the misery that such thoughts bring. All the teachings of my childhood and early girlhood seemed a mockery, a foolish superstition. My soul was plunged into utter darkness as I traveled down the road of the "Everlasting No." Perhaps it may help you if I tell you of my suffering at that time, suffering which continued throughout a long winter with increasing mental anguish. I had no one near me to whom I could reveal my troubled mind, and I have never since spoken of it to anyone, till now.

I am not sure that I can put my experience into words which will be of any value to you. This may comfort you, or it may not. Each soul that prays, "Let this cup pass from me" must enter the Garden of Gethsemane alone.

One night, I was so utterly wretched that I could not sleep. I did not attempt to undress. I had grown so desperate that to me life seemed a failure. Of what avail were a few short years here on earth, so fraught with struggle and sorrow, if this were all. The air in my room seemed stifling. I threw a shawl around me and went softly down stairs, not wishing to disturb those who could sleep. Unlocking the front door, I went out, feeling that it did not matter if I never returned. Nothing mattered—nothing mattered. Life was a bitter cheat, devoid of meaning.

The night was very still. I walked on, in what direction I

neither knew nor cared. At last my mental agony was too great. My body called a halt. I stopped. It was about one o'clock in the morning and the hush of the midnight was upon me. I became conscious of the cool night air and suddenly, I know not why, I turned my face upward, and my eyes met the silent gaze of the stars. They appeared to me unusually brilliant. I knew that each was in its own orbit, moving forward in the vast realm of incomprehensible space, and something within me seemed to say, in almost audible words, "Account for these stars if you can. The mighty weight of each is upheld in ether, lighter than air; each moving forward in its own path. Account for these worlds and worlds, without a guiding power, without a God!" That was all. The voice within ceased speaking. The silence of the night once more surrounded me, and in the heavens above me the stars continued to shine steadily and bright.

I turned and retraced my steps and softly re-entered my home with the one glimmer of inner light that the night had brought me. *There must be a God.* How could I account for these myriads of majestic worlds without some creative intelligence behind them?

This was all that, at the time, I could accept. But it meant much. Somewhere in the universe there was a God, a creative power far beyond the comprehension of man. Slowly, through days and weeks of holding to this thought, my mind worked its way back to a form of faith in which it began to find comfort and strength. I reasoned that if there must be a God, he must have, somewhat, revealed his real nature in this world of ours. Even man reveals himself in his work. If this material world shows traces of the kind of a God he is, I will study nature. And in nature I found processes fitted in a marvelous way to ends, seemingly planned far in advance. Water, when freezing, expands, and thus covers the ponds and streams, and preserves the life of the fish. The ground, when freezing, loosens the clods of earth, and when the

spring thawing comes, the seeds easily expand and the young shoots climb into the sunlight. The petals of flowers, which I had merely admired heretofore, now revealed themselves as part of the reproductive processes of nature. The silken tassels of the corn were miracles of ingenuity. Trees balanced themselves, by multiplying their roots in proportion to the strain made upon their branches by the storm and stress of climate. Everywhere, I found means fitted to ends, until I came to man. There I found great and mighty means. I found emotional power, the depth of which has never been sounded. I found will-power that could endure torture of rack or fire, but if given freedom could surmount every form of obstacle and attain unto unmeasured possibilities. I found intellectual power that had sounded the seas, unlocked the secrets of the earth, and measured the heavens, yet, apparently, with no adequate end. Man, like the beast of the field, seemed to be born to reproduce his kind and, like the beast of the field, to die and become part of the soil that fed him. Was this reasonable? Was God, so consistent in everything else, fickle in his greatest creation? Or was there some destiny fit for this soul that could strive and suffer and conquer? Then, too, the question arose within my soul: Could you create a child with all these possibilities, and then shut him off from all communication with you? Would not the promptings of your heart cause you to devise some way by means of which he could communicate with you? Would you not want your child to understand that you loved him and watched over him? Why should God be less or do less than you? Is it not therefore reasonable that some revelation should have come, that man in some way, should have discovered the means of communication? Thus I reasoned.

Tremblingly I began again to turn to the sacred book that gave the record of three thousand years of communication between God and man. I did not know at that time, that all religious teachings implied some form of communication. As

I read I found old and familiar words that now had new meaning: "To them that do his will he giveth life eternal." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "Now we see, as through a glass, darkly." And on and on, just such messages as a loving father would send to his children.

I slowly learned that Christianity is not a revelation from God, but a revelation of God, and that Jesus Christ is the supreme revealer and as such is the Savior of mankind. I know I cannot make you see this as I now see it. It took years and years of slow thinking, of trying to do God's will that I might know whether or not life could connect me with him. All these years had to come between that star-lit night and my present firm belief that somehow, some day, somewhere we will meet our loved ones and then we will understand what this life means.

I thought it possible that my belief that in every sorrow and in every trouble the "eternal God is my refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms" might be of some little comfort to you. You will have to work it out in your own way. Thousands and thousands fought this same battle, long before you and I were born. My own remedy for your present pain is to get to work. Get back into your work again, or get into some new form of work as soon as possible.

I have written this long letter because my heart is so full of love and sympathy for you. I have already stated that I have never before told anyone of this dark period in my life.

Ever with love,

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

CHAPTER IV

Stepping Out on the Highway

DEAR KATE:¹ George has planned to go to the Philadelphia Centennial, and is going to take me with him! Is he not the most generous of brothers? It seems almost like a dream. I have been closely confined to the home by little Sammie's illness and my household cares.² These, added to my heaviness of heart which has not let life bridge over the void that came with my mother's death, make George's offer doubly welcome. You know how I loved Mother; from my earliest childhood I have almost worshipped her. After my sisters were married and left home, she and I became closer comrades. She was interested in all I did, and I was interested in all that gave her pleasure. Since she left us, I have felt that part of my very self has gone. I think I understand now what the old Roman writer meant when, on being told of the death of his most intimate friend, he exclaimed, "Now is gone the theatre of all my action."

At first, I felt that I did not care to go to this celebration of the hundredth anniversary of our nation's life; but my sisters urged it, and now I find myself looking forward to it with real interest. Mollie is to go with us, while Lillie takes care of the home and the children. We shall be away about a month, visiting New York City, Baltimore and Washington, in addition to Philadelphia and the Centennial. It will be my first trip East and my first experience of genuine sight-seeing. Heretofore, my sojourns away from home have been visits to friends or relatives and only of a social nature. George is especially interested in having Mollie and me see Washing-

¹Mrs. O. W. Richardson was a girlhood friend. Miss Harrison lived in Mrs. Richardson's home in her early kindergarten days, in Chicago.

²See the story of "Little Sammie" in *Misunderstood Children*.

ton. He was in Grant's army, as you may recall. As a boy of nineteen, he marched down Pennsylvania Avenue in the last grand review before the army of a million men was disbanded. The glamour of that great day has glorified all Washington for him. I will write you, later, of the trip.

Just now, I am reading Washington Irving's *Life of Washington* to refresh my mind concerning the times and events which the Centennial is celebrating. All the nations of the world are sending contributions of their arts and industries as tributes to the greatness of this historical achievement. I wonder if George Washington knows of the recognition which the world is now giving to the ideals for which he and his brave little army strove so heroically? Washington Irving makes the deprivations and discouragements, the trials and defeats, and the final victory all very vivid.

BETTY.

Dear Nell:^a

I promised to give you a full account of my trip East and my visit to the Centennial. I then had no idea how impossible it would be to carry out such a promise. It was overwhelming, both as to its magnitude and the multitude of things to be seen and admired.

One day, while we were in New York, we took dinner with a friend of my sister Mollie who married a cultured and charming doctor. He and his wife had been to the Centennial and were full of enthusiasm over it. During the dinner conversation, I asked the doctor what department of the Exposition would be most worth my studying. He paused for a moment and then said, "I think, perhaps, the jewelry might be more interesting to you than any other one exhibit; it is quite extraordinary." I thanked him, but inwardly I scorned his suggestion and silently ejaculated, "Does he think that I, an American, coming to see with my own eyes his-

^aMiss Nellie Alexander was a kindergartner in Chicago, a girlhood friend of Miss Harrison's, and later, her neighbor with whom happy visits were exchanged.

torical portraits and letters, articles of furniture and other objects that existed in the days when we were only British colonies, will be especially interested in jewelry! How little he knows of the great longing I have to see a Greek statue, or to stand before one of Turner's pictures." I think I wrote you that Jean C— and I had read Ruskin's five volumes of *Modern Painters*. One of Turner's pictures, so eulogized by Ruskin, is announced in the catalogue.

We spent our first day at the Centennial getting acquainted with the grounds, locating the different buildings, and getting a hasty view of one or two of the interiors. As a whole, it was amazing, bewildering, confusing. The next morning, Mollie and I chose to go to the Art Building, and Brother George went to the railroad exhibits. Filled with the thought of seeing one of Turner's pictures glorified with luminous atmospheric effect, such as no painter had ever before succeeded in imprisoning upon canvas, I urged that we go straight to the Turner exhibit. We hurried through rooms filled with French, Flemish, and English masterpieces, and some few Italian treasures; but we scarcely stopped to glance at any of these. We hurried on, till we reached the room in the English department where hung J. M. W. Turner's "Off the Welsh Coast."

The number on the picture corresponded with the number in the catalogue, and the name on the frame announced it as one of the paintings of "England's master artist." My imagination, saturated with Ruskin's rhapsodies, had led me to anticipate a scene of indescribable beauty—"bathed in soft, tender light with an atmosphere that could almost be felt"; whereas, in reality, I stood before what was, to me, a dirty-looking daub with impossible hills of dull, brown-green background, with something on the top of one of them which might have been intended to represent a ruined castle. In the foreground was a muddy brown paint somewhat irregularly put on the canvas. I had to presume it represented the sea. I

know you will laugh at what you will call my extravagance. But I can give you no idea of my disappointment and chagrin. I turned from the picture with much the same feeling that one would have on discovering that a dear friend had betrayed him. Mollie laughed until she had to hold on to me for support. Of course, I now see the humorous side of it; but at the time I was indignant with Ruskin and angry with Turner for not painting better pictures—or pictures that suited me better.

The next day I slipped off alone and went once more to see this picture. By this time my indignation had cooled down, and I had more the feeling of sadness in the thought that there was a world, in which Ruskin gloried, far beyond my power to enter. The Turner still seemed to me a poorly-painted, uninteresting picture; but my faith in Ruskin had returned, and as I left the room, one of his wise sayings came into my mind: "No man is a hero to his valet. Not because the hero is not a hero, but because the valet is a valet." Was I to belong to the "valet" class of minds? Not if I could help it! More anon.

Yours with love,

BETTY.⁴

Dear Nell:

I sent my letter to you yesterday without giving you the significance of the Hungarian doctor's advice about my visiting the jewelry exhibit. Duly humbled by my experience with the Turner painting, I consented the next day to visit the jewelry department. The exquisite workmanship there displayed was beyond anything I had ever dreamed. I will describe one coronet, or chaplet "for my lady's hair." It was

⁴Fourteen years later, I spent a most enjoyable afternoon in the Turner room in the National Gallery, London, and I was thrilled by the marvelous beauty of the atmospheric effects of the pictures. Turner seemed literally to have transferred the sunsets to his canvas. In "The Shipwreck" and "The Stress of Storm and Speed," he seemed to have transfigured the tempest. I was alone, and wandered about the room amazed by the brilliancy of light which appeared to come from the pictures that covered the walls. I had left the "valet" stage and stood in the presence of genius, recognizing its heroic achievements.

hand-carved silver, representing two charming garlanded cherubs holding between them a wreath encrusted in small diamonds. The garlands of roses and rosebuds, also hand-carved with the same exquisite care, trailed off to the back, thus forming the rest of the wreath. It was a bit of poetry done in silver. There were brooches, pendants, bracelets, and even finger rings equally artistic in conception, all showing the same skilled workmanship. I had never seen anything that could be remotely compared to them. They helped me to visualize more clearly the days when Greece was in all her glory; when beauty was wrought into the commonplace things of every-day use. Do you remember the scene in George Eliot's *Romola*, where Baldassare unexpectedly appeared before Bernardo Rucellia's guests at a supper in the Rucellia gardens and accused Tito of treachery, and how the truth or falsity of his statement was tested when the accuser was asked to find the scene in Homer which was carved on a ring Bernardo Rucellia had purchased from Tito? At the time I read the story, I thought it a bit of George Eliot's imagination. But here I saw gems no larger than a signet ring carved so wonderfully that they told a complete story.

Then came the French bronzes, the Italian mosaics, the Russian jewels, and the picture galleries with masterpieces from every great gallery of Europe! Oh, Nell! Nell! It's of no use. I cannot tell you what all this has meant to me. It's too much to put it into a letter, no matter how long the letter may be.

Yours with love,

BETTY.⁵

⁵I have inserted these two girlhood letters, not because of my personal amazement and delight caused by this first contact with the art world, but because my experience was typical of the majority of the visitors to the Philadelphia Centennial. It was, broadly speaking, the average American's first sense-perception of the world of beauty, created by art.

We had at that time no public art museums in America, and few private art collections. Travel in European countries was the privilege of the few, not the matter-of-course experience of many. There had been no great international expositions on this side of the Atlantic. There were no traveling loan art exhibits, no stereopticon travelogues, but few art photographs, and few illustrated art books.

The Philadelphia visitors, as a rule, sensed and admired particular art objects—this picture, that statue, the beautiful blending of color in a piece of tapestry, the graceful

Dear Jean:⁶

The die is cast. My Rubicon is crossed. Here I am in Chicago about to begin my new work, of which I wrote you. I told you in my last letter how strenuously my sisters opposed my going out into the world to earn my living, and with it my independence. They used every argument they could against my going, the chief one being my uncertain health. Dire were the predictions of my returning to them within two or three months, with a long siege of illness ahead of me. I answered most of their lesser arguments. To this last I could only say: "I can but try. If I come back broken down, you will have to nurse me through it and forgive me. It seems to me the only right thing to do."

At last they sent for Brother George to come and talk the matter over with me. You know how I love him and how much influence he has always had with me. He came, and all Sunday afternoon we talked together. He took the ground that no woman in our family had ever been obliged to earn wages, and that he was more than willing to support me the rest of my life. He told me that if I did not wish to live in a married sister's home, I could live where I chose and he would pay my board. I knew that he meant what he said, for he had always been generous to me; but I also knew that he could not afford to support me without great sacrifice of his own interest. I had thought the subject over and felt that I was

carving on Florentine furniture, the rich glow of bronzes, the shimmering light on Venetian glass, the ethereal light on delicate laces—all, new and wonderful to most of us, quickening the pulse with their loveliness. But to few, came the significance of art, with its great message, until the World's Fair at Chicago.

You, the younger generation of today, if you choose, can take advantage of all the opportunities which now exist, and which are offered to you in increasing numbers. You can, at least, learn to appreciate art, even if you cannot create it, and feel its harmony and beauty enriching the inner life.

I had lived in a world of fairly well-bred people and in a world of books, with an almost passionate love of sky and trees and hill-tops, with the joy that winter and summer and spring and autumn bring. I had been thrilled by the "wonder of the dawn, the glory of the noonday, the splendor of the sunset, the calm of the twilight, and the mystery of the stars in the blue-black velvet of the sky." From my earliest childhood, I had loved the out-of-door life and beauty, but I had never before come in contact with the portrayal of human emotions, such as the great art world has given to mankind.

⁶Jean Carpenter was a girl friend of Miss Harrison in Marshalltown. She later became a member of the Chicago Kindergarten College faculty, and still later, she and Francis M. Arnold, music teacher in the college, were married. Mrs. Arnold died in 1912.

in the right; besides, the urge within me was too strong. To accept my living expenses from another meant to me to be a parasite, unless I could give full equivalent in service. I think I got this idea from you. I know you have unconsciously taught me that a woman can earn wages and still be a refined and more or less cultured person.

I tried to make George see that as long as I was needed to keep house for our father, his brotherly generosity was all right. But I was no longer needed as a home-maker, and it would not be right for me to live in idleness while he was working so hard.

After pacing up and down, up and down the floor, in keen mental distress while arguing the case, he stopped in front of me and said, "If you will, you will, I suppose, and I cannot stop you." Then came my painful confession: "I will have to borrow the money from you, George." He answered, "Oh, of course, I will furnish you the money if you feel that you must go. How much will you need? Don't call it a loan. You know I will be glad to give it to you if it will make you contented."

He looked so unhappy as he spoke that I was utterly wretched at heart, and I fear I would have given up the venture if he had pleaded any longer. But he changed the subject at once and began asking practical questions about the date of my going, and if I had made any arrangements for a boarding place. I was much comforted by his affectionate interest.

My train was due to leave Marshalltown at three o'clock in the morning. As I was acting contrary to my sisters' wishes, I insisted that I needed no one to go to the depot with me, and I arranged to have the bus call for me on its way to the station. I bade the family good night and good-bye at ten o'clock and settled myself in the parlor to read until the bus came for me. But I will have to confess I did very little reading. I was afraid I might fall asleep and miss the call of

the bus driver. At last came the call; I sprang up, put on my coat and hat, picked up my gloves and satchel, and slipped quietly out of the house. As I closed the front door, I remembered that I had left my long, blue traveling veil hanging on the hall rack. I turned quickly to open the door, but it was firmly locked; then I recalled that the door was self-locking. I had actually locked myself out of a home.

I think I shall never forget how clear the moonlight was and how quiet and calm the familiar grass and trees and neighboring houses looked as I hurried down the path to the gate where the clumsy old omnibus, with its glare of yellow light, awaited me, while something inside of me seemed to be shouting, "You have shut yourself out of a home!"

I climbed into the bus. There were three sleepy-looking traveling men in it; but for their presence I think I should have indulged in some weak tears. As it was, I tried to look as if it were an ordinary experience for me to be starting out alone to a strange city at three o'clock in the morning. All the way to the station my heart was thumping heavily, and the rolling wheels of the bus jeered almost audibly, "Alone! alone! alone!"

I took the day coach. It was about half filled with passengers sleeping in all sorts of uncomfortable positions. One or two looked up, yawned, and dropped to sleep again. Soon the rhythmic chug, chug of the wheels began to chant, "No home! no home! alone! alone! no home! no home!" and they kept up the dolorous wail. I must have dropped into a doze before morning. I was aroused by fellow-passengers beginning to stir. I turned to watch them as one after another rose and stretched his cramped body, while some of them exchanged greetings. Now and then I still heard the chant, "No home! no home! alone! alone!" and I shall probably hear it many times in the days that are to come.

You must have passed through some such experience when you started out to earn your way in the world. So I thought

you would understand my experience as no other friend could. Write to me when you can. I suppose I shall be awfully homesick for a while.

Yours with love,

Chicago, Ill.,

BETTY.

September, 1879.

Dear Kate:

Here I am at last at Mrs. Washburn's. I think I wrote you that she had agreed to take me. You know my life so well that of course you are aware that I have never been in a boarding house; in fact, I have never known anyone who has lived in a boarding house. Mrs. Washburn is in every sense of the word a lady, and she knew my mother. I therefore have arranged to come here to live while I am taking my kindergarten training. I had written her that I must economize to the fullest extent possible. She has kindly offered to let me share the hall bed-room on the first floor with her daughter Anna, a girl of about twenty-one. It is the smallest bed-room I ever saw, being about the width of the hall into which it opens. We have a double bed, a small wardrobe containing four double hooks, two for Anna and two for me, a stationary wash-bowl in one corner of the room, and one chair. There is not room for two chairs, but one of us can sit on the edge of the bed while undressing and brushing her hair.

I am to have the unique experience of keeping my collars, gloves, handkerchiefs, and lighter underwear in a big paste-board box under the bed. The rest of my belongings will remain in my trunk in the basement trunk-room. But what matter? I will soon adjust myself to these little inconveniences. I am with friendly, clean-lived people; besides, I am here to be of service in this great world of ours.

I will be out to see you next Sunday if possible. How I wish you lived in town, instead of in a suburb.

Ever with love,

Chicago, Ill.,
September, 1879.

BETTY.

Dear Sister Mollie:⁷

I arrived safe and sound yesterday morning and easily found my way to Mrs. Washburn's, where I received a cordial welcome. I have waited to write to you until after our first class today with Mrs. Putnam, in order that I might tell you about it. There are only four members of the class; two are Chicago girls and the third member is from southern Illinois. Our mornings are to be spent, for the present, in observing the work with the children. Later, we are to be given charge of a group of children and plan the work for them.

There are three kindergartens in Chicago. The first is Mrs. Putnam's⁸ on the South Side, connected with a private school of which Mrs. Stella Dyer Loring is the principal. The second kindergarten is in the home of Mrs. E. W. Blatchford, a wealthy lady on the North Side. It is conducted by Miss Anna Howe.⁹ The third kindergarten is an independent enterprise; I do not know its exact location. It is directed by a Miss Josephine Jarvis, a daughter of a commodore of the United States Navy. She has translated some of Froebel's writings into English. All of these directors are most en-

⁷Miss Harrison's sister, Mrs. S. P. Knisely, who went with Miss Harrison to the Philadelphia Centennial. Her home is Marshalltown, Iowa.

⁸"Alice Harvey Putnam was born in Chicago, January 18, 1841, and throughout her long life her heart and her activities were centered in that city. She watched its growth from a little village to a mighty giant of a city, sprawling over the prairie and building a foothold for itself where she had seen waves rolling beyond sandy beaches.

"She was known in her city as one of the pioneers in education in the widest sense of the word. She was a leader in the Chicago Woman's Club, one of our earliest organizations to be identified with the civic and social advance of the city. She was a musician of note and interested herself in the opening of the Music School of Hull House. With the establishment of the University of Chicago she came in contact with the inspiration brought to the city by John Dewey.

"The Chicago Kindergarten Club, founded by Mrs. Putnam and Elizabeth Harrison, was active for years as a kind of continuation school for young kindergarten graduates."

Pioneers of the Kindergarten in America. The Century Company, New York.

⁹Miss Howe has for many years been recognized as the leading kindergarten training teacher of Japan.

thusiastic over the new method of educating young children through play.

We have lessons three afternoons each week, from two to five o'clock. We will, for the present, visit three kindergartens in the forenoon; later we will be assigned to one of these for regular observation; and still later we are to work with the children. I hope my assignment will be with Mrs. Putnam; if so, I will have the advantage of her directorship, and at the same time I will be in walking distance of my boarding home. The walk will be through busy streets, full of interesting sights. We are also to be given certain books and pamphlets for home reading, to be discussed in class. I was glad to hear that these books are to be loaned to us by Mrs. Putnam. I will not have to buy them. This is another item of economy which I am beginning to learn in addition to many other new lessons. Mrs. Putnam told us that, as yet, very little of the Froebelian printed matter has been translated into English; even this little is expensive and very difficult to obtain. Mrs. Putnam seems most earnest, and I am sure that she wants to help us in every way that she can. She thinks that this new way of developing one's children through comradeship with other children, through plays, games, songs, stories, and simple hand-work, will have wonderful results in the future life of the world. Her classes are held in her own home. She has three little girls, two of whom are in the kindergarten. I think I am going to like her. I shall be able to tell you more in the near future. Kiss your two blessed babies, and their cousin Sammie, for me. I miss them dreadfully. Love to all.

Your affectionate sister,

Chicago, Ill.,
September, 1879.

BETTY.

Dear Sister Mollie:

Mrs. Putnam asked me to go home with her for luncheon

today that we might talk over some new work which we are introducing. Except my Sunday visit to the dear Crawfords, this is the first Chicago home I have entered as a guest since coming to the city last September. And now it is March. You may rest assured I accepted Mrs. Putnam's invitation with alacrity. I cannot begin to tell you how much I miss the social life of our past. I am deeply grateful that when I am not at my work, I am with such a kind, friendly family as is Mrs. Washburn's. My work-a-day life, however, absorbs most of my time and thought. Each day grows more interesting than the one before.

While we were at luncheon, Mrs. Putnam spoke pleasantly of the way in which I had handled the case of an obstinate child that morning. I laughed and told her I had helped to manage children since I was eight years old. Then I told her of old Jerry MacFadden who lived in the shanty down under the hill, whose young wife had left him with three little children. She claimed he was too fond of the bottle. I laughed and told her of our having to make over old clothes for these children, and, what was harder still, when they were old enough to go to school, of having to teach them certain crude ethics, such as not to steal and not to play truant.

I told her also of the Rev. Dr. K—, who came to live in the house just across the street from us, because his wife said that she wanted to be near good Mrs. Harrison, who, she knew, would help her to take care of her five children—all under ten years of age. The result of this was that the K—children lived mostly in our yard, and I played croquet with them to keep them from throwing the balls at the passing vehicles and horses, and swung them in the big swing—till I was tired—to divert them from the grape arbor; or told them stories to keep them from playing tag on our garden beds. I explained that they were not bad children, just bright and restless youngsters who did not have enough to do at home and so ventured into all sorts of new activities—some

good, some not so good. I added that by the time these neighbors' children were tamed I had served some ten years' apprenticeship. Then my two sisters began coming home with their babies, and there was for me the deep joy of tenderly handling and lovingly watching the wee helpless things. I confided to her that to me, they were the most wonderful children that the world contained.

When I finished this tale of early contact with child-life, Mrs. Putnam said, "Had I known all this, I think I should have felt like giving you a diploma at the beginning of the year, instead of waiting till June." But I assured her that it had all been rather blind, instinctive work, and that every lesson with her showed me better ways to deal with the young life about me. The constant care of other people's children in the past has indeed helped me to see more readily the significance of the kindergarten. Two of my classmates complain of the work as hard, whereas to me it is an unceasing delight. Kiss your two blessed bairns for me. They have played a part in helping me to get ready for my life work. I feel sure that I have chosen the right means of serving humanity.

Always with love,

Chicago, Ill.,
March, 1880.

BETTY.

CHAPTER V

Early Training and Teaching

MY kindergarten training under Mrs. Putnam in 1879-80 was a one year's course of thirty-six weeks, including five days a week in morning practice and four afternoons in lectures and lessons in hand-work. When I finished the course and received my diploma, I received also, much to my surprise and delight, a certificate stating that I was qualified to train kindergartners. When Mrs. Putnam therefore asked me to return the next year as her paid assistant, I gladly accepted the offer. My salary was forty dollars a month. This meant another year of close economy, for I had decided that I must have lessons in clay modeling and drawing, and more knowledge of other arts of expression, all of which I felt were necessary in my further preparation for the great work which lay before me. This necessitated my wearing cotton gloves and three-and-a-half-dollar shoes, both of which were a sore trial to me. The facts that for several years I had to walk whenever I could, instead of using the street car, and carry my lunch in a bag on my arm, were minor matters. The great thought which possessed my soul was how to become worthy of my work.

I had, in practice, a year of earnest study of the child at first hand, and a glimpse of his nature and his higher needs. I received much from Mrs. Putnam's teaching and example which was of benefit to me in after years as well as at the time it was imparted. The impulse of her work with both the student and children was her mother spirit and her reverence for all that appeals to the life of the spirit. I do not mean that she gave any definite religious instruction other than a simple morning prayer of thanksgiving which any

child could understand, and the singing of one or two stanzas of some child-like hymn. The prayer was reverently uttered and the hymn was sung in softer tones than were the other songs. To the day of her death Mrs. Putnam was generous in her acknowledgement of the good which was to be found in the advancing thought of the world, even when it differed from her own view. Years later she strongly recommended to me William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*, as a book well worth reading. But her faith in her own religion never wavered.

Perhaps a few extracts taken from my notebooks may make plainer this early interpretation of the philosophy of the kindergarten. I wrote pages and pages on each topic and sub-topic. The wonder of it all, coupled with the joy of growth, so flooded my life that it had to find relief in expression of some kind.

"The kindergarten system is called 'The New Education,' because it is the first organized plan for the harmonious development of the physical, mental, and moral nature of the child.

"The child needs the companionship of his equals in age and ability. The adult cannot furnish this kind of companionship. The kindergarten supplies it. The purpose of the kindergarten is both to keep away from the child harmful influences and to supply him with helpful influences.

"Do not crowd the child. When he is ready for new knowledge, he will ask for it.

"The chief purpose of the kindergarten material is to provide simple and durable toys in which color, form, and movement are reduced to their elementary manifestations in order that through the use of them the child may learn to observe like qualities in other objects about him.

"Do not thrust your ideas upon a child when he has ideas of his own which he is endeavoring to express. Guard and guide manifested impulses rather than start new ones.

"Do not check a child's physical activities unless they encroach upon the rights of another child or lead in a wrong direction."

At this time, it must be remembered, only a few books had been written on the scientific, and at the same time, sympathetic training of children. None at all so far as I know attempted the psychological study of child life. Dr. William Hailman's careful translation of Froebel's *Education of Man* and Dr. Henry Barnard's compilation of papers by various writers, concerning Froebel's work, together with the Baroness von Marenholtz Bulow's *Reminiscences of Froebel*, were the best we had along this line. Much of this pedagogic thought is considered out of date today because it is self-evident and has been so universally accepted; but at the time of my early training, it was so startlingly new as to sound like a trumpet call.

You, of the younger generation, will be surprised that I should have cared to write down some of the topics recorded in my notebooks, but at the time they were written, they gave to my imagination the wings of an eagle, and I often walked home after classes entirely unconscious of the passing crowd, because I was so absorbed in my heart's song of rejoicing that I had been permitted to become a teacher of little children, a helper to young mothers.

I sometimes wonder if all the normal-school diplomas and college degrees are worth as much as the fervor of those pioneer days when the study of the interests and the impulses of the little child brought a new revelation. Do not misunderstand me. Far be it from me to discount the value of normal schools and teachers' colleges, or the highly important research work, which is being done by anthropological, psychological, and sociological experts. In fact, the larger part of my life has been spent in striving to create that kind of training which I feel that all teachers should have if they would understand a child's advancement from finite and temporary

things into the world of infinite laws of growth—laws both of his own nature and of the community in which he lives. I frankly admit that I have made many mistakes. I have tried many experiments that were futile, and I have obstinately refused to listen to views which were contrary to my own; but my more-than-forty years of teaching were filled with the desire to help in proving that the teacher's profession is one of the great fundamental forces in the higher life of the world.

The nature study of the kindergarten, an innovation in child training, made a deep impression upon me. I had an opportunity during the early days of my teaching to bring it to the attention of Mrs. Anna Kendall, a wealthy widow, who was brought up on a farm. She was a woman of much more than the average intelligence. She had traveled extensively in Europe as well as in America, and was keenly interested in America and American ideals, and, of course, in educational standards and methods. I told her of my kindergarten children's delight in watching the process of a small green caterpillar merge into a beautiful white butterfly. When I had finished the story, she looked at me earnestly and said, "It is a pity, a great pity, that all children cannot have wider experiences with nature and its wonderful way of working."

A few days later, Mrs. Kendall came to see me and said, "I have a plan to lay before you. If we cannot give the children of our cities the blessed influence of country life, we can give the country mothers some realization of the wealth of opportunity which lies unused and unappreciated around them; with all the beauty and power and mystery of nature waiting to serve them." She paused, and looked at me very intently for a moment or two; then she began again, "If you will give up your work here and go with me to every farm district in Illinois, and explain to the farmers' wives the new idea of education, and show them how much they can do for their children in the way of leading them to love

beauty, helping them to see how joy can commingle with honest work, I will gladly pay your present salary, or more if need be, and defray all our expenses."

She was not a handsome woman, but her face grew radiant, almost beautiful, as she spoke. I saw that she was speaking from the depth of her heart. "How could we make your idea a practical reality?" I asked. "How do we know that these overworked farmers' wives would take time to listen to us? Consider the details we should have to work out." She replied, "But I think the appeal to the mother-heart would open the way. In all probability we would have to go as does the peddler, from farm to farm, but I think we could soon get them together in groups."

We talked on for about an hour, and I was delighted with the vision she placed before me. I thought the matter over and realized that riding about in all kinds of weather, over rough country roads and oftentimes eating unwholesome food, would be too much for my strength; and I knew I must not break down, I simply must not! So the wonderful plan had to be given up, but it remained with me as a hope for the future. Several years later I found pasted in one of my scrap-books the following extract, from "The Open Door," a brochure of one of my former lectures:

"During the Conference for the Education of the South, held at Nashville, Tennessee, in April, 1912, after most encouraging reports had been read concerning the studies made in scientific farming, one far-sighted, hard-headed man arose and said, 'It is all right to raise more corn and grain and better stock, but what do we want with these things except to make better homes? How are we to have better homes unless our girls learn how to make them?' "

This was a pertinent question. To the average reader of the report of this conference comes at once the thought of

domestic science and sewing classes and lectures on sanitation. In fact, the answer given to this query was to show in the next compartment of the exhibit a prize apron made by one of the girls.

I find I added to my manuscript the following: "I have nothing to say against teaching untrained girls of the South how to make pretty aprons. But I want to call attention to the fact that, so far as I was able to ascertain, nothing was said at this conference about how the average country girl could learn to use aright the inexhaustible wealth of nature; and how, when she became a mother, she could enrich the lives of her children by leading them to see and enjoy the beauty of the sky and trees and plants by which they would be surrounded, by teaching them the great importance of agriculture to the welfare of the race, or by training them in habits of thoughtfulness and responsibility in the care of animals. By this larger understanding of nature, she would deepen and strengthen her children's reverence for the mighty but invisible power of the Creator, and thus awaken such ennobling emotions as can be fully felt only by the child brought up under the open sky and in contact with nature's mysteries.

"The opportunities of country mothers to develop the lives of their children are so great that any city mother may well envy them; and yet how few farmers' wives, how few lonely women on far-away ranches know how to fill their own lives and the lives of their children with vital and uplifting interests by learning aright the lessons of that great silent teacher—nature? We who have felt the joy that nature can bring, who have realized the wonderful creative possibilities that are struggling to find vent even in the so-called dull child, *know* that we have something to give to these mothers."

In the many years that have come and gone since the date of the above letters and notes, our educational authorities have

awakened to the realization of the enormous opportunities offered by rural life, both for practical training in the essentials of wholesome living and for the development of ethical ideas necessary for right community life, until now the topic, "How shall we improve our rural schools?" is one of the great subjects discussed at all educational conventions. The furnishing of free transportation for the children of several small district schools to one central school is now an established method in wide-awake localities. By combining the school funds, better apparatus, better buildings, and better teachers, are secured.

The rapid growth of the National Parent-Teacher Association, re-named the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, has made it possible to place within the reach of the most isolated home the newest and the best books and pamphlets on the subject of child study. The United States Bureau of Education has a "Home Department," which sends out, without charge, pamphlets concerning various phases of child welfare, and outlines of courses of reading for parents, with lists of books for the courses. The United States Department of Labor has a "Bureau of Child-Welfare," which distributes literature on health, including almost every phase of hygiene. The National Kindergarten Association, from its headquarters in New York, is supplying articles written by trained mothers to help less well-informed mothers to better understand the value of the kindergarten for every normal child. These articles are based upon practical personal experiences and are therefore the more valuable.

The newspapers all over the country are printing syndicated articles concerning the value of the right kind of training, to secure health and freedom, and gain the pursuit of happiness, for the child. Questionnaires have been sent out by training schools and colleges for the purpose of obtaining

health statistics along the lines most needed for the best development of the child. Research in foreign countries is also being made, and the best the world has to give will be laid on the altar of childhood.

But there are still thousands of hungry-hearted mothers on newly-settled farms, in mountain cabins, on isolated ranches, who are yet to be taught that they can enrich their children's lives by teaching them to love the glory of the sunset, to feel the mystery of the stars, to rejoice in the majesty of the storm-cloud, to watch for the tender change in color, in branch, and twig as they whisper of the coming spring, to rejoice in the beauty of the wild flower of the summer, to fairly revel in the gorgeous color of the autumn, and to become conscious of the rest and purity of a snow-covered landscape. Consider for a moment the value of thus loving beautiful colors. A love of harmony of color brings a refinement which money cannot buy, and it need not cost a cent. It takes only a few moments of time now and then to call the child's attention to all this beauty and genuinely to share it with him. Then, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

Think of the educational value of a familiarity with plants and animals. Rural life is filled with the almost unbelievable demonstration of the mathematical precision of plant structure, the near-human conduct of the colonies of insects, the love and loyalty of domestic animals. All these surround the country child, and could so easily broaden his sympathies and increase his powers of observation.

It is great to have lived through this last half-century! Yet there is much more to be done. Child-labor is dwarfing and robbing thousands of children in some of our states. The slums of our great cities are breeding disease in the bodies and vice in the hearts of tens of thousands of other children

who are to be America's future voters. Children should be familiar with live animals and insects and growing plants; they should handle sand, clay, pebbles, and like materials, and learn through experience the laws of nature as well as the laws of arts and industries in order that they may grow up creative workers, not mere mechanical drudges. This new idea of education becomes most impelling, even when one but halfway realizes it.

CHAPTER VI

A Visit to St. Louis and a New Venture

IN the middle of my second year with Mrs. Putnam, a mother who spent many mornings with me and the children said to me, "You ought, you really ought, to go to St. Louis and see what Susan Blow¹ has to give. She is the most profound student of Froebel in America."

After that we had several long talks about the significance of the work and of Miss Blow's interpretation of it. Finally I decided that I must visit St. Louis and see for myself whether or not it would seem best for me to go there the next year. From that time on, every dollar that could be saved was husbanded for the trip. On the night of the last day of the winter term, April 16, 1881, I started for St. Louis. My finances showed twenty-five dollars. The railroad ticket each way was six dollars, leaving me thirteen dollars for board, car fare, and unknown incidentals for ten days. I had decided to risk it, having through an acquaintance already made a reservation at a cheap boarding house.

I arrived one hour before the time for Miss Blow's Saturday morning class in Froebel's *Mother Play* book. I had been told that Froebel wrote this book for mothers, that they might better understand the emotional stages of childhood, which, if rightly developed, would help them to rise into the higher life of mankind. I had also been told that this was

¹Susan Blow was Froebel's most intelligent interpreter in this country. She was born in St. Louis, June 7, 1843. Her father, Henry Taylor Blow, graduated with honor from St. Louis University and was appointed United States Minister to Venezuela, later went to Congress, and in 1869 was appointed Minister to Brazil by President Grant.

Well educated for her period, naturally a mystic, and deeply religious, Miss Blow instinctively understood the philosophy of Froebel's theory of education and became his most consecrated student and teacher in America. Her first book, *Symbolic Education*, published in 1894, is still an authoritative work. Her other published books are *Letters to a Mother*, *The Mottoes and Commentaries of Froebel's Mother Play*, *Educational Issues of the Kindergarten*, *Songs and Music of Froebel's Mother Play*, *The Kindergarten*.

the central thought not only of the book but of Froebel's idea of education. After his call to young mothers had failed, he opened his classes to unmarried women, calling them to spiritual motherhood.

Miss Blow had followed Froebel's example and had opened her classes to all teachers who chose to attend them; consequently students had flocked to her from many parts of the country. Dr. William T. Harris was then superintendent of the St. Louis public schools, and he had persuaded the school board to establish kindergartens in a number of the schools of that city. In these schools, such of Miss Blow's students as were preparing to teach had their practice work under her graduates. St. Louis was the only city in the United States, at that time, which had given official recognition to the kindergarten.

On my arrival in St. Louis I hurried to my boarding place, deposited my satchel, washed my face and hands, and combed my hair, as my trip had been on a day coach without toilet conveniences. I hastily swallowed some breakfast and started for the Eades Kindergarten, where the Saturday lectures were given. When I entered the room I was surprised to see about two hundred women seated in the small kindergarten chairs on either side of tables which extended across two sides of the large double room. A foreign-looking man was just closing a lesson on Herodotus. As nearly as I could understand his subject, he was describing the early-race historian's comingling of sense-perception and imagination. I quietly slipped into a chair and awaited the coming of Miss Blow. The lecture soon ended, and I found the speaker was Dr. Denton J. Snider, the famous Shakespearian scholar. There were a few minutes of talk and chatter among the students; then a hurried whisper, "Miss Blow has come." And in a moment more all were seated and the room was quiet.

I leaned eagerly forward to catch sight of one of the world's great educators. My heart thrilled at the thought that

I was in her presence. She entered in a swift imperious way and nodded to three or four members of her class who sat nearest to her. She took her seat at the head of one of the long tables and began to remove her gloves before I could get a good look at her. She was small in stature, with a slight, well-rounded, and graceful figure, a refined and keenly intellectual face, light brown hair, and expressive blue eyes. She was altogether attractive and distinguished in appearance.

Her first words were: "There is no need for any waste of time. Is there? Well, let's begin our lesson." She gave a quick look around the table; however, she did not wait for any remarks to be made, but began speaking at once. I was afterwards told that impatience with people who wasted their time was one of her characteristics which frequently caused her to be misunderstood. Later in her career a friend wrote me: "I have often seen Miss Blow so quickly accept an opposing point of view in an argument, when it was valid, that her opponent did not realize that she had accepted the point and had taken up another angle of the subject in question." I knew nothing of this at the time of which I am writing, but I was amazed at the rapidity of her words and the tremendous sweep of her thought.

The lesson that morning was on the "Grass Mowing Song" in the *Mother Play* book. I am not able to give you an adequate idea of what that hour meant to me. I had never heard anything which could compare with it. Miss Blow spoke rapidly, but there was not the slightest hesitation for the exact word she wanted. Thought swept on to still greater thought. She passed quickly from the way in which Froebel would have the young child led through some simple personal experience, such as the mid-day meal of bread and milk, to other experiences of his life in which he could begin to feel his dependence upon other people. She touched lightly upon the value of story and picture and song as a stimulus to vitalize his personal experiences. Here she threw in a caution

against leaving a child too long in sense impressions, adding that self-expression must come in order to develop individuality, and thus prepare the child for his share of service to humanity. Swift as the flight of a bird she swept on to the dependence of each one of us upon our fellow men. Her wealth of illustration seemed exhaustless. "A feeling of dependence," she said, "if rightly awakened, arouses gratitude. Gratitude develops desire to give recompense or to serve." Her manner of delivery might be described as that of perfect sincerity of one who had reached bottom rock of truth, and who knew it. Higher yet she mounted. Desire to serve revealed opportunity to serve. To really serve another brought with it an interest in that other. "This," she stated, "is the true beginning of institutional life, of the family, of the economic world, of the state, and of the church; for religion, true practical religion, demands brotherly love and willing service." This unswerving conviction of the truth of what she was saying communicated itself to the class. The tone with which she uttered the thoughts and the evidence of her faith in their truth was overpowering and arose almost to the sublime. Then came the climax: "To the extent that we gladly, joyfully serve our fellow men, do we come nearer and nearer to companionship with God!"

The hour was ended. She closed her book at which she had not looked throughout the lesson. I had forgotten where I was, forgotten everything, in fact, save the mighty world of thought into which she had carried me.

It was a new revelation of the meaning of life to one who had traveled down the dark road of the "Everlasting No," into the pit of the "Center of Indifference." Even when I entered the class that morning, I had only painfully climbed a short way up the road of the "Everlasting Yea." I, halting, doubting, had, as it were, been shown the path by means of which one might ascend to the realm of truth, such truth that nothing could ever again shake its foundation. The clear-

cut logic of Miss Blow's arguments had led me step by step from the commonplace things of every-day life to the possibility of "companionship with God." I was compelled in later years to differ radically from Miss Blow in many practical matters. But never will I forget while life lasts, the light and inspiration she gave me on that Saturday morning.

Someone spoke to me, asking if I were a new member of the class. This caused me to realize that the class was breaking up and that I had in my hand-bag a letter of introduction to Miss Blow, written by Mrs. Putnam, who was anxious that I should get all I could of the St. Louis viewpoint. I approached Miss Blow timidly, much as a neophyte might approach a great cardinal. She read the note, glanced at me, and said with a pleased smile, "We are glad to have you with us. Come to this kindergarten Monday morning and I will have someone here to show you around."

I then left the room, but I did not return to my boarding place. I wanted to be alone with the mighty thought which the morning had brought me. I wandered about the streets, hour after hour, unconscious of the houses I passed or the people I met. I was in a new world of readjustments. I saw all the past in a new light. For the first time in my life I began to understand the meaning of the great Christ life and the Master's teachings, His sufferings and death. It was no longer a theological dogma that one must accept in order to be saved, but a luminous, glorious invitation to come up higher, to lead the life of true humanity. Now I knew what Froebel meant when he said, "My kindergarten is based on religion, and back to religion it must lead."

I returned to Chicago at the end of my ten days' visit to St. Louis with the firm conviction that I must go there the next year and learn Miss Blow's interpretation of the kindergarten. Just how I was to get the necessary funds was another question. I knew that, to my family, it would seem sheer nonsense to spend another year in preparing myself to play

with little children, after I had obtained a good foothold in a pleasant school in Chicago; I had already been engaged for the next year by the principal of the Loring School, with an increase of salary. I knew also that my friends in Chicago would look upon my going as a quixotic adventure. But nothing mattered to me then save one thing: how to earn the money to get to St. Louis for further study. This would seem an easy task to the fortunate young women of today, as almost all the doors of the industrial and commercial world are now open to them. In that day there were, for respectable women, but two ways of earning money: teaching school and sewing. I chose the former, with some misgiving as to my fitness. There lay before me so much to be learned as a teacher. But the inner urge drove me on. I knew I was better prepared than the majority. I had had two years of study under a noted teacher, while a large percentage of the teachers of that day had only two or three weeks of summer institute work.

After having satisfied my conscience about the matter, I ignored the protests of my friends, resigned my position in Chicago, and opened a summer kindergarten in Marshalltown, my sister's home town. I wisely limited the number of children to twenty, and secured an excellent musical assistant on condition that I would canvass the town for her afternoon piano pupils. It was my first venture as a kindergarten director and, frankly, I was nervous over it.

I was determined to make the school a success so far as it lay in my power to do so. I rented the most attractive church parlor in town and saw that it was kept scrupulously clean, spending an hour or more each day sweeping, dusting, and arranging the work for the next day. I could not afford to hire a janitor, for every dollar had to be saved for the next year's expenses. I made the room somewhat more attractive with a stand of blossoming plants, a globe of goldfish on a small table, and one or two pictures on the wall. I also had

part of the ground in the rear spaded and prepared for a garden.

My two years of training under Mrs. Putnam had given me a profound respect for Froebel's *Education by Development*, though I was allowed a somewhat free following of his directions as to the use of his material. My short visit to St. Louis had greatly increased this respect. In preparing my work for this summer kindergarten I felt it obligatory to begin by playing with the *ball*, and to do some hand work with the first exercises suggested by the "school of pricking." Do not smile, my reader, if this seems to you absurd, but remember that this was the dawn of the present-day awakening to the fact that *education is not merely the giving of information, but it is also the development of self-expression and willing service*. In these sketches I am tracing the unfolding of that great thought as I have seen it develop and take definite form through the years that have tested its validities and discarded its non-essentials.

For two weeks before my summer kindergarten opened, the town was ablaze with posters, illustrating the wonders of the circus which was coming June 30. My kindergarten was to open July 1. The morning parade of the circus was headed by six huge elephants, followed by caged lions, tigers, and other attractions. All the children in town were on the street thrilled with the excitement that only a circus can bring to a country-town child. I had enough common sense to realize that the next morning the children would be full of the circus, and that the first step in the "school of pricking," which was for the purpose of illustrating the mathematical fact that a line is the connection between two points, would be of little interest to them. I therefore hastened home, and from a package of patterns of various animals that I had brought with me from Chicago, selected the outline of an elephant and transferred it to a number of blank cards. To these I added the outlines of one or two other animals. The

next morning, after an informal talk with the children concerning the parade, and after each child had told the others his name in order that they should establish friendly relation with one another, I brought out my pricking pads and pricking needles and the pictures I had drawn, and asked the children if they would like to make a picture to take home. They were delighted. What child is there whose heart does not gladden at the prospect of realizing his power to produce a result, however simple? We then had a story and the children were dismissed for the morning. This was a violation of prescribed rules, but my life-long acquaintance with little children had taught me that the wisest way is to make friends with them before attempting to guide their activities.

One five-year-old boy, the only child of a prominent physician, was entered for the term by his mother, notwithstanding his father's skepticism about this new method of teaching. At the noon dinner on this our opening day, the father in a slightly ironical tone said, "Well, Karl, what did you do at your wonderful new school today?" The boy proudly straightened himself up and replied, "I pricked an elephant! and Philip pricked an elephant! and Sam pricked an elephant! but Mabel, she pricked a cat." The bewildered astonishment of the father's face changed when the mother hurriedly produced the pricked outline of an elephant which Karl had triumphantly brought home, explaining its purpose. A hearty laugh finished the incident.

This story was of course too good to be kept, and to the end of the summer I was met by first one and then another of my friends with various allusions to my cruelty to animals. Notwithstanding this and several other amusing misunderstandings of the purpose of the school, it prospered and after the first term of ten weeks it was continued till the holiday season. My strong belief in the greatness of the work and the sacredness of the child's undisturbed and unconscious growth helped me to resist all temptation to exhibit the

clever children. I recall a severe testing of my convictions in one particular case of a charming five-year-old boy who had extraordinary dramatic power. Later in the fall term seeing that he had unconsciously developed this talent to an unusual extent, I said one day to his mother, "I do wish Henry's father could see him dramatize some of our plays." She promised to try to bring him soon to visit the school. A few days after this talk Henry mischievously stuck out his foot and tripped another child who was playing that he was on a galloping horse. I stopped the game and quietly explained that it was not kind for one child to interrupt the play of another child and that the little boy might have been hurt by the fall. I did it, assuming that the act had been one of thoughtlessness. Henry looked somewhat ashamed, and the game continued. However, the spirit of bravado or some other not-yet controlled impulse caused Henry again to put out his foot and trip another child. I stopped the game and said, "We cannot have any little child play with us who is not willing to play fairly. Henry, you may go and sit in your chair until we have finished playing our game." A few minutes after Henry was seated, in walked his father and mother. With a radiant face the mother whispered to me that this was a holiday for Henry's father, and she had persuaded him to come with her to the kindergarten, as he would probably not have another free day that year. She was delighted to be in time for the games.

Two courses lay before me: one was to reward a busy man who had taken his only holiday to come and witness his son's dawning histrionic ability, which really was remarkable; the other course was to remain true to the standard that the child who would not play fair could not play with us. Henry's imploring eyes—they were beautiful dark blue eyes with wonderful expressive power—and his mother's look of pleased anticipation both pleaded strongly for the first course—to yield the point, smooth over the transgression, and let

Henry re-enter the play circle. On the other hand, my conscience told me that I would be lowering the standard of right for every child in the kindergarten. Almost in tears I whispered to the mother, "I am sorry but Henry has consciously done wrong, and broken the rules of the game." She turned and explained the case to her husband, and our play continued. Henry's eyes never left my face. His look of entreaty was almost heart-breaking. At the end of the game period, I turned to him and told him if he thought he could do what was right, he could be the leader in the march to the seats. He came forward eagerly and in a moment more was leading the children in spirit and in the tone of an embryo captain. I did this to restore his self-respect. The father and mother remained for about an hour.

Next day I received a letter from Henry's mother, telling me that in the evening of the day of their visit, Henry's father had taken him upon his knee and asked him about the morning kindergarten. The boy confessed that he had intentionally done wrong. Then she added that the two had a talk together about what kind of a man Henry's father wanted him to become. The incident established a lasting friendship between us.

My guest book showed two hundred names which indicated an awakening interest on the part of the public in early childhood education, but somewhat lessened the good work I could have done with the children had the visitors been less numerous. However, this throng of guests brought its reward, when, three years later, the kindergarten was put into the public schools of Marshalltown. When I next became director of a kindergarten, I had learned my lesson and restricted visitors to four a day. Later, I welcomed at any time the mothers who had learned the danger of making children self-conscious by talking about them in their presence. Frequently a mother with an infant in arms would spend a good part of the morning in my kindergarten.

CHAPTER VII

Western Pioneering in Culture

BY the Christmas holidays I had two hundred and fifty dollars with which to cover my expenses for six months' study with Miss Blow in St. Louis, including transportation. Joyfully, on January 2, I entered the beginners' class and was sent to one of the leading kindergartens of the city for my practice work. In a very short time, I was allowed to include the second year's work with that of the first year. At the end of the first month, Miss Blow personally invited me to attend her class, called the E. E. Class, the term arising from the fact that it was composed of what were known as the Extra Excellent directors. I eagerly accepted the opportunity. With this class in addition to what I already had, I virtually took the two years' course in six months. But it meant working far into the night and getting up at five or five-thirty in the morning, when the weather would permit. It was six-thirty before breakfast was served, and sometimes nature rebelled.

So profound were the depths to which the new line of thought carried me that all considerations of health, pleasure, or anything else were blotted out. I do not recommend this excess of concentration; few constitutions can stand it, and I doubt not that it lessened my power of endurance for the years of vital work which were to come.

I had been thrilled by the sweep of Miss Blow's intellectual presentation of this new idea of education, and inspired by her earnestness. In her oftentimes symbolic way of expressing her thought, she had stated that the university was the crown of the educational structure, and that the kindergarten was its foundation. But I had a faint, not fully defined, feeling

that the home in the early life of the child was the starting period, not only of physical habits, but of ethical ideals. I had come in contact with most of the mothers whose children came to the kindergarten. They were agreeable, intelligent women, but not one of them comprehended what I was trying to do with and for their children; and it troubled me. I did not then know that I was groping my way to what was to be the central interest of my future life work.

Miss Blow's theory of education is so fully explained in her three books, *Symbolic Education*, *Letters to a Mother*, and *Educational Issues in the Kindergarten*, together with her report as a member of the Committee of Nineteen of the International Kindergarten Union, that I need not repeat it here. To the few who understand her applications of Froebel's teachings in his *Mother Play* book, she was always a source of inspiration. But a number of her students showed by their work that they had grasped details only, instead of fundamental principles, and consequently did not have the flexibility and freedom necessary for *creative work founded on the selection of educative environments, the experiences, and the culture background of each group of children*; consequently their work became formal and non-creative.

Please remember that the time of which I am writing was in the very early days of the kindergarten, and the public schools of that era were cast-iron in their rigidity. It was only through the tactfulness of Dr. William T. Harris¹, at that

¹William Torrey Harris was a New Englander, whose ancestors from the time of Thomas Harris who sailed with Roger Williams from England in 1630 to establish the settlement of Providence in Rhode Island, had been leaders in education. He prepared for college at Phillips Academy, Andover, and entered Yale in 1858, graduating in two years. Dr. Harris' friend, Denton J. Snider, lecturer and pioneer in the cultural life of Chicago, writes of his place in the educational development of the West:

"St. Louis was at this time the center of a significant philosophic movement like that of Concord. Dr. Harris became the voice of that movement through his journal of *Speculative Philosophy*, his many essays and addresses all reinforced by his winning personality. As Superintendent of Public Schools he marked an epoch in education not alone locally but throughout the nation. He wrought with equal power on both theoretical and practical lines as is indicated by a glance at his bibliography, which includes four hundred and seventy-nine separate titles covering all the important questions raised in the educational world in half a century. Moreover, he roused and kept active the community's interest in his work, which embraced the entire St. Louis movement, including not only philosophy but art and literature. He held easily the cultural supremacy of St. Louis. More than any other man or institution he dominated the intellectual character of the city. His influence was central and radiated through the whole community."

time superintendent of the public schools of St. Louis, that the kindergartens were permitted to be recognized as part of the public school system there.

In the kindergarten to which I was assigned, there was a chasm between the primary grade and the kindergarten. This may have created a spirit of bravado on the part of Miss Blow's followers as a reaction to the contempt shown by most of the elementary teachers for "such foolishness." Be that as it may, the result was a tentative clinging to the letter of the law and excessive use of mathematical materials. This started a reaction which brought in all sorts of non-educative experiments and crude and inartistic materials, which produced trivial and uninteresting results. Of these the children tired as they had tired of the excessive mathematical materials. These experiments ignored the fundamental conditions of Froebel's "Law of Development," namely, that through the creative use of the materials which surround him, the child should learn by his own hand-work, as well as by excursions and dramatic play, to interpret the life about him and to realize little by little that "In all things there lives and reigns an eternal law."

The present-day general acceptance of the project-and-plan theory in the education of young children is doing heroic and significant work, but unless it includes the joy of serving as well as the realization of personal power, it, too, will prove a sorry failure; for the salvation of the individual life, as well as of national existence, depends on co-operation, or what the founder of the kindergarten called *gliedganzen*, an almost untranslatable word.

Froebel had emphasized dramatic play as a factor in helping the child to enlarge and enrich his life—one of his most important contributions to education. This idea also had to suffer from misinterpretation. On the one hand, there was insistence on the exact forms of play used by Froebel as illustrations of how the child's every-day experiences could

be utilized to broaden his sympathy with an observation of the real world about him, and also to make vivid the world that pictures, songs, and stories brought to him, and thereby clarify and organize his imagination. On the other hand, all sorts of trivial things were dramatized. I have known the entire activity of a group of children to be absorbed in "Dickery, dickery dock," or "Hi-diddle-diddle," for several days, both in the manual activities and during the period assigned to dramatic play.

This beginning of the "new education" had to pass through the old but ever-recurring experience of narrow verbal interpretation versus no interpretation of life's lessons, until personal experience taught us much that books and leaders could not teach.

Along with personal experience came my more definite study of the psychology of childhood. Part of my St. Louis plan of study was to include decorative geometric designing. For the lack of the right understanding of design I felt myself hampered in the use of what was unfortunately called "forms of beauty," which were strongly recommended by Froebel, and I was keenly disappointed when I found there was no evening class in that subject. Mr. Halsey Ives, director of the St. Louis Art Museum, must have seen disappointment in my face. I had explained to him the impossibility of my joining a day class, and also the need of the right conception of the principles of decorative as well as constructive art if one was to lead children into an appreciation of the beauty of proportion and balance.

He sat silent a few minutes looking out the window, then turning to me, he said, "I will tell you what I will do. If you care to come over the two evenings each week that I am here, I will lay out a course for you and personally supervise it. I cannot promise to give you much time, but you seem so eager for this work that I will do what I can for you." With heartfelt thanks I accepted his kind offer, and for the

remainder of the school year I was at the museum on the appointed evenings, from seven until nine o'clock. Each evening this generous teacher gave me from fifteen to twenty minutes of his valuable time, looking over and criticising my work and explaining to me the essential elements in good designing.

My lessons, although limited to twenty evenings, opened to me the rich world of beauty created by lines. They also led me into an appreciation of the beauty of Japanese stenciling and to some understanding of the etcher's skill. Later in my life this appreciation of the power of lines to express the deepest human emotions and thoughts added to my delight as I gazed upon the Raphael Cartoons which hang in the Galleria degli Arazzi of the Vatican. I know now that the pleasure I have in really good newspaper cartoons is due, in part at least, to my realization that humor, wit, or pathos may be expressed by a few lines, by means of which the skilled artist portrays the human face and form.

At the end of my stay in St. Louis, I was offered the directorship of an afternoon kindergarten. The offer, however, I declined, as a few weeks before that time the superintendent of schools in an Iowa town had visited St. Louis and offered me seven hundred and fifty dollars for the next school year if I would conduct a morning kindergarten in one of his schools. As much as I longed to return to the stimulating intellectual atmosphere of St. Louis, I decided to accept the offer made by the Iowa superintendent instead of the one offered by Miss Blow. This was a larger salary than the St. Louis offer, and it also gave me the opportunity to test the new theory which I had learned from Miss Blow. I was promised complete freedom in the Iowa school. I was exceedingly anxious to do this testing, as I was in some doubt as to the practicality of the dictated hand-work which was given by one or two of Miss Blow's assistants. These doubts were justified, in time, and resulted in a distinct difference

between the St. Louis work and my own. But this in no way destroyed the friendship between Miss Blow and me. I have never ceased to wonder at and to admire her marvelous insight into the eternal verities of life. This insight, together with her wide culture, was also her weakness. It kept her from understanding the simple needs of the little child.

At the end of my St. Louis course of study, on my way back to my sister's home, I stopped to see the superintendent in whose school I was to teach. I wanted to talk over the coming year's work with him. He greeted me pleasantly, and for a few minutes we chatted on matters in general. Then, in a slightly embarrassed tone, he said, "I have changed my plans somewhat since I saw you in St. Louis. Do you think you could conduct two kindergartens, instead of one? I can furnish you with a high-school student, or at least a grammar-school graduate, as an assistant in each kindergarten." "I do not think I could do justice to the work under these conditions," I replied. Then I added, "One should be in intimate touch with the children in order to study their needs aright. You know this is to be my first experience as a director of a kindergarten." There was a pause. Then he said, "Do you not think you could manage it in some way?" I realized that my hour of temptation had come, and I felt my hopes and aspirations crumbling into dust. If I said "No," I realized that it would in all probability cause the canceling of our verbal contract.

It was too late in the season to hope to get a position elsewhere which would give me an opportunity for advancement. The only alternative seemed to be to apply for some ungraded country school, which would offer but a meager salary and a still more meager chance to come in contact with the great new thought now beginning to enter the educational world.

I had attained to sufficient self-discipline to know that one could endure the most unpromising surroundings, and make of them stepping stones, if one remained faithful to a great

ideal. The only course which now seemed possible was for me to go back to my family and acknowledge myself a failure—after three years of study. And yet as the matter stood between me and the superintendent, if I accepted his proposition, how could I retain my self-respect? I would be doing poor work that would eventually bring discredit upon the cause in which I had enlisted. There was a silence in the room while my soul was waging a mighty battle. Finally, when I could control my voice, I looked up and quietly said, "I do not think I could." He answered, "Oh, well, all right, I merely thought we might talk over some such arrangement." With that we both arose and I hesitatingly said, "I would be willing to take less salary, but I could not undertake to do less than my very best work." "Of course not. It is all right," he replied. I instinctively knew that my fate was sealed so far as that proposition was concerned. He bade me good-bye pleasantly, and I left the room a miserably disappointed and disheartened young woman. The next day I received a note from him saying that my resignation would be acceptable to him. Of course, it was sent without delay.

A few days later I received a letter from Mrs. Loring, asking me to return to Chicago and take charge of her kindergarten at a salary of seven hundred and fifty dollars, as Mrs. Putnam had decided to start a kindergarten in connection with some church work. I accepted gladly, but asked permission to spend the last half of the school year in the New York training school, provided I could furnish an acceptable substitute. This was granted and I returned to Chicago for the next term.

Although our meeting came about in 1885, after my return from New York, I like to connect Denton J. Snider with this period in the cultural growth of the West. One October day of that year, Mrs. Stella Dyer Loring, the principal of the school in which I was teaching, sat at her desk looking over her morning mail, when a servant brought to her the cards of



The Loring School, 2535 Prairie Ave., Chicago, in Which Miss Harrison Taught in the Early Eighties

two callers. On the larger card was printed "Professor Hermann von Schlack," and on the smaller one was written "D. J. Snider." Mrs. Loring at once went to the reception room. The two men rose at her entrance. The nearer one was a tall military-looking man with a fierce upturned moustache. The other was a middle-aged man of modest appearance, with a keenly intellectual face. Going forward to the latter, she extended her hand and said, "Professor von Schlack, I presume." Before that gentleman could reply, the other man stepped forward and making a low bow announced himself as "Professor von Schlack," the expert chiropodist, who had come at the request of two young ladies for professional service. The other, a more modest man, stood smilingly observing the scene. As soon as the above announcement had ended, he said, "I am Mr. Denton J. Snider. I have called to see Miss Harrison concerning some lectures which I am to give in Chicago."

Having sent Professor von Schlack to the house-mother, Mrs. Loring turned in her gracious way and explained to Mr. Snider that the lectures of which he spoke were to be given in the library, and asked him if he would like to see the library. In the meantime she sent to my school-room for me.

This was the introduction in Chicago of one of the most learned men who ever visited our city, one who was destined to lay a laurel wreath of no mean significance at the feet of the prairie city. At that time, Dr. Snider had written several books, one of which was *A Walk in Hellas*. This poetic description of his pedestrian travels through the classic land of Greece has become a guide-book for tourists in that country, so vividly does it bring to life a glorious period. Later on he wrote other books, interpretations of the great world poets; still later he gave to the world an interpretation of art and history and a psychological explanation of the philosophical thought of the world; also novels, essays, and

poems, until a total list of his books numbered some sixty-seven volumes.

The following is an estimate of Dr. Snider's work made by the *New York Times*, October 8, 1922.

"Europe knows this great teacher of literature better than we do. His earlier work on Greece is regarded as one of the world's great books. Students of Homer and Dante have found his interpretations a necessity; his commentary on Goethe is a standard work in Germany, and his commentaries on Shakespeare are regarded among the best in England."

Owing to the fact that we were building up a unique school, and also because of the wide publicity the Chicago papers gave to my mothers' classes, I met many distinguished leaders in the educational world at the various national and state educational conventions, but I think I have never met a more thorough scholar than Dr. Snider. (He personally never used the title of Litt.D., which his university conferred upon him.) He spoke with fluency several languages. He read a number of languages in his research work, including Greek, Latin, French, and German. He had familiarized himself with many of the great museums of Europe, in the course of a two years' tramp over that continent. Through this experience he became interested in architecture, sculpture, and painting.² He was also a genuine lover of good music, having learned in his youth to play on five or six instruments in his native town band. He attained a remarkable fluency in reading musical notation. I have seen him follow the score of an opera with as eager interest as most attendants of concert and opera read the outline of the program. He was bluntly intolerant of anyone in whom he detected or thought he detected insincerity, and yet he was a true teacher, patient with immature pupils or with rather slow-minded mature members of his classes.

He remained some twenty years in our school, teaching

²See his *History of Architecture and Music and the Fine Arts*.

classes in the interpretation of literature, art, and philosophy, and, later, psychology and sociology. A friendly relationship was soon established between him and the Crouse household, of which I was a member. He became a frequent visitor, dropping in at any time for a meal or an evening talk, often for a quiet Sunday evening dinner. He was always a welcome guest. I often followed Dr. Snider's lectures with a free, friendly talk to the class on how we could apply this or that principle in our work with the children. As one of the many proofs of the value of this kind of study I recount the following:

On the opening day of our school in the autumn of 1914, instead of giving my usual welcome and a sketch of my vacation, together with an outline of the coming work for the freshman class, I gave an impromptu talk on war and on the philosophy of *the cause of wars*, bringing up instance after instance in the long list of wars since the time of Herodotus, "the father of history," showing in each case how the side that had the higher ideal was always victorious in the end; even if it had sometimes to endure thirty or a hundred years of war, the right triumphed at last. I illustrated with the story of a handful of Greeks struggling with the mighty army of the Persians and finally gaining the victory; of little Holland in its successful fight against the tyranny of the powerful kingdom of Spain; and of a few English barons struggling for the Magna Charta against trained British royal tyranny.

The class sat in rapt attention, and I did not realize until I had ended how much clarity of thought I had gained in my study with Dr. Snider, much of it through his method of pointing out fundamental principles and leaving the details to be looked up by the student. One mother, an entire stranger to me, who chanced to be present at that lecture, told me

months later, that from that day on she had never doubted the success of the Allies.

Dr. Snider's untiring research for authority along his line of writing stimulated me many times in my own study. His seemingly exhaustless fund of information, including books that were worth-while, his reading to us from his own manuscript, often followed by explanations of views contrary to those he held, caused me to gain steadily better habits of study and clearer insight into the value of the cultural world. I owe him a great debt of gratitude.

CHAPTER VIII

Early Childhood Education in New York

IN the early years of the kindergarten in America from 1860 through the eighties Madam Kraus Boelte¹ was generally considered the greatest exponent of the Froebelian theory in this country, notwithstanding the high endorsement Dr. William T. Harris had given Miss Blow's work in St. Louis.

I had heard much about Madam Kraus's charming personality and her play spirit with her children in her kindergarten. I had felt the absence of spontaneous play in the St. Louis kindergartens as a whole. I did not know how to word it at the time, but there was also a lack of individual self-expression on the part of the children. Even with my great admiration for Miss Blow, I felt that I should have some experience in a freer atmosphere. I talked my convictions over with Mrs. Putnam, who was an enthusiastic admirer of Madam Kraus, having had a summer course in her kindergarten. I decided that I must see the best that America had to give in this direction. I had loved the sincerely tender and

¹"Maria Boelte was born in Hagenau, in the grand duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, November 8, 1836. Her father, Dr. Ernest Boelte, was a lawyer by profession and for many years held the position of judge and chief magistrate. His sister Amély was well known as a popular writer. It was this 'Aunt Amély' who, regarding the advancement of women as her special mission, influenced Maria to study the kindergarten system with the widow of Frederick Froebel. After she had finished her training, she went to England and was instrumental in developing the education of young children and training students in kindergarten work in London.

"Maria Boelte, in 1874, married Professor John Kraus in New York City, where she had come to develop kindergarten theory in America. With her husband, Madame Kraus conducted the 'New York Seminary for Kindergartners,' with a model kindergarten, connecting classes, and a lower primary department; this was a forerunner of the progressive schools of the present.

"In 1872, at a meeting of the National Education Association in Boston, the kindergarten received its first recognition in America, when Madame Kraus-Boelte gave her explanation of Froebel's theory and method. At the Centennial Convention of the National Education Association held in Baltimore in 1876, she lectured and exhibited kindergarten work done by the children, and prepared a special exhibit of children's work done under the auspices of the Bureau of Education in Washington. This exhibit was sent to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia later in the same year."

Pioneers of the Kindergarten in America. The Century Company, New York.

patient mother-spirit of Mrs. Putnam with her kindergarten children, and had marveled at the insight, and almost worshipped at the shrine of Miss Blow. But if there was anything more to be learned, I felt I must try to get it if I was to be true to my high calling of teacher.

After a somewhat lengthy correspondence with Madam Kraus relative to my admission to her training class, it was decided that I might enter the class on condition that I should ask no consideration through past training or experience, but enter as a beginner. I obtained a six months' leave of absence from the principal of the school in which I was teaching, and started for New York on January 1, 1883. I shall never forget the eager thrill and the feeling of awe with which, on January third, I rang the door-bell that was to admit me to this acknowledged leading kindergartner in the East. My ring was answered by a little flaxen-haired German maid, who conducted me into a large bare-floored room, still trimmed with hand-work and Christmas greens. I was informed that I was to wait in this room until Madam Kraus Boelte sent for me. It was not long until her head assistant came in and formally stated that I might remain to the morning session of the kindergarten and when the afternoon classes were over I might have a private interview with Madam Kraus.

At nine o'clock the children and the adult students of the training class began to assemble. I now discovered that this large room in which I was seated was the cloak room. Later in the day the games were played here, as Madam Kraus was most insistent concerning the need of change of air from the work-room to this play-room and back again to the work-room for the rest of the morning, after the work-room had been thoroughly ventilated. I watched with eager interest the coming of the children, who were unwrapped and sent at once to the floor above. The adult students remained in this room until nine-thirty. When the summons came, I was invited to go with the students to a larger and more sunny

room, where thirty-five children were standing in a circle with Madam Kraus, who was holding the hands of the children on each side of her. They were all smiling and bowed a good morning to each of us, as one by one, we entered the room.

After the reverent singing of a simple morning hymn, we were seated at low tables, which were arranged to form a hollow square, the adults taking their places among the children. Madam Kraus then lifted a vase of flowers from a stand near her. She asked one of the children to take it around and let each one present see and smell the flowers, and then the children should tell her who smiled the most while smelling the flowers. Before the child was half-way around, every face was bright with happy smiles, Madam Kraus meanwhile exclaiming, "There! there! now she smiled, didn't she?" and "Ah, I see the dimples coming out in Anna's face. See, Neddie is smiling all over," and so on. The children finally decided that the blushing face of one of the training students had smiled the most. The children then all clapped their hands and spontaneously sang a little song, thanking the young girl for her sweet smiles. They were all as happy as if each had received a gift. After this came the naming of Christmas presents received by the children and the students, Madam Kraus exclaiming delightedly over every announcement, as if she personally had received the present. I cannot give the full details of the morning, but it was like the fellowship of one large harmonious family, each interested in all and all in each.

I turn over page after page in the faded old journal I kept during my study with Madam Kraus, and on almost every page I find some such expression as "The children enjoyed this so much," or "The happy atmosphere of the morning caused the time to slip by so swiftly that when Madam Kraus exclaimed, 'O children! children! It is twelve o'clock! We

must put our work away quickly,' I was as much surprised as any child in the kindergarten."

The last half hour, from twelve to twelve-thirty, was given to games. I was in the class two months before I saw a new game introduced, and there were not more than half a dozen old ones; but how happily they played them! how freely they sang the little ditties that usually accompanied these games! There was often much experimenting with what they could do with their hands, their arms, their legs, or their whole bodies. I recall one such time, after they had been told the story of a wind-mill and were asked to stand up and whirl their arms around and around like the sails of the wind-mill. One boy said he could make his leg turn around as well as his arms and proved that he could; then he turned the other leg in the same way. Several children showed that they could do this also. Finally, one little fellow announced that he could make both legs turn around at the same time. "Dear me," exclaimed Madam Kraus, "I never saw a boy do that!" "Well, I can," he asserted. All the children laughed. "Children, we must not laugh at Rudolph. Perhaps he can show us how he does it." "All right, I will," answered the sturdy Rudolph, and he immediately walked over to the wall and dragged a chair to the center of the room. Placing himself on his stomach across the seat of the chair, he whirled his two legs to the right and to the left. How we all laughed and clapped and how happy he looked at having proved that it was the achievement and not himself that made him proud. There was no self-consciousness in his act. Rudolph helped first one and then another of the children to master the movement. I tell this because Madam Kraus was willing to let experiments be tried. This one satisfied the children and it was not repeated.

Our dismissals were always the same. We stood in a circle. Mr. Kraus played softly on the piano the music of the hymn which had been sung that morning; after he had played it

once or twice, Madam Kraus nodded to one child and then another, who quietly slipped away; he played on and on until the last child had been wrapped and had left the room. Some of them softly hummed the tune he was playing. The morning thus ended upon the note on which it had begun.

When one student in the afternoon class asked why more games were not introduced, Madam Kraus curtly replied, "Too much variety creates false appetite. It is better to do a few things well." Her manner changed completely in the afternoon classes. Here, she was the stern disciplinarian, and woe betide any student who dared to vary in her work from the exact directions given. There was always a question in my mind why she allowed so much freedom with the children and yet was so rigid with the training class. I had to do again all the hand-work I had wrought in St. Louis and rewrite my abstracts on the didactic materials of the kindergarten and general lectures. But I was so delighted to have the opportunity to see this joyous life with the children that I willingly did the taxing drudgery, though it often kept me up until midnight. I can best illustrate this spirit of play and the accompanying mathematical exactness by quoting from my diary:

"Today we had a lesson in perception with a half ring given by Madam Kraus. She first held the half ring high in the air and said, 'Children, what does this look like?' There was no answer. Then she said, 'It reminds me of something I saw up in the sky the other night.' 'Oh, the moon! the moon!' exclaimed a half dozen children. 'Yes, the half moon,' she replied. Then she began singing a moon song, in which all the children joined. After this each child was given a half ring. Then Madam Kraus said, 'Touch the two ends of the half ring; now touch the middle of it. Lay it on the table so that the two ends point toward you. Now what does it look like?' 'A moon!' exclaimed a child. 'No,' said Madam Kraus, laughingly, 'it only looks like a half

moon when it is held high up in the air. What does it look like when it lies there on the table?' 'A dish! a dish cover! a pin cushion! a croquet arch!' A half dozen other names were given by the children, to each of which Madam Kraus responded, 'So it does,' as if it were a new discovery to her. When the children had exhausted the supply of percepts the half rings suggested to them, Madam Kraus, speaking very slowly, said, 'Now put your finger in the middle of the half ring and turn it over just so.' As she spoke she turned one so that the two ends pointed away from her. The children did the same, and she exclaimed, 'Now, what have we?' 'A dish! a bowl! a cradle! a bird's nest!' At each announcement she again expressed pleasure and surprise. She then gave a two-inch stick to each child, and said, 'Is the stick at all like the ring?' 'No! no!' exclaimed the children. 'What! no! How many ends has the half ring? Can you hold the stick in the middle as you did the half ring? Are not both of them round and smooth?' To this the children responded, 'Yes! yes!' gleefully. 'Ah then, do not say that they are not at all alike. But how are they different?' The children looked at the stick and half ring in a somewhat puzzled way, but no child ventured an answer. 'Can you turn the two ends of the half ring toward the front of the table?' This they did. 'Can you do the same with the stick?' she asked. The children seemed to see the joke and laughed heartily as they said, 'No!' 'Now,' she added, 'each one of you can make a picture with your half ring and stick.' All the children were in a merry mood. One made a bowl, another a table with a dish on it, another a table with two legs, and still another made the letter K. Several other similar objects were made and named by the children. Then Madam Kraus quietly said, 'Put your sticks at the back of the table.' And what seemed to me remarkable was that not one child again touched the sticks. Then three more half rings were given out and they were told to turn the middle of the rings to the center. Again the rings were

turned, now with their ends to the center. The children had evidently been trained to place the material by the laws of design as they arranged the half rings by opposites. Each child was now given four whole rings, and told to change the 'pretty form' to suit himself for the rest of the period. Some of the younger children merely laid their rings in rows, while the older ones made various designs. The period of dictation lasted not more than twelve or fifteen minutes, and every child seemed thoroughly interested in it. In the free play, each child employed himself happily and in no way disturbed his neighbor."

As the years have ripened educational thought along lines of greater freedom, and dictation in any form has been tabooed, I have wondered if it were Madam Kraus's charming personality when with the children that made this and similar exercises so joyous—exercises which were in no way related to their personal experiences; or if there was an inner intellectual gratification in enlarging their perception of resemblances and differences in familiar objects, and in learning how to rearrange their material in a patterned manner. And yet, when I think of Madam Kraus's two huge books of *Gifts and Occupations*, which one of my students rechristened "Canned Goods," I realize that we over-emphasize our own views, and too often lack the spirit of the true teacher. We are not willing enough to seek the good that may lie in theories and methods of those who differ from us.

Some old letters written about this time to a Chicago friend, also in kindergarten work, express some difficulties students had in their relations with Madam Kraus:

Dear Nell:

The abstracts came today. You need not have taken the trouble and stamps to send them. I do not need them. "What shall it profit thee if thou can'st argue learnedly about the Trinity, and do not live so as to please the Trinity!" says

the dear old Thomas à Kempis. Just now my heart is saying, "What shall it profit thee if thou can'st write learnedly on every 'gift' of the kindergarten, if thou can'st not deal wisely with the little child." Madam Kraus has told me a wholesome truth, in an abrupt, rough-shod way, and I am smarting from the cut. I feel as if I never wanted to enter a kindergarten again. You told Mrs. Richardson the truth when you told her that I was not only getting acquainted with John Kraus, but that I was also getting acquainted with myself. I am learning how vain, weak and impatient I am. Unless I can make myself over (just now I have small hopes), I have no right to be a kindergartner. You do not know how mercilessly I have been made to face *facts* since I have been here. And yet *facts* are what I need. I have been too visionary, too enthusiastic all my life. Please do not write me for a couple of weeks, at least. You would write sympathizingly. Sympathy is not what I need. It is strength of character. I will write you more of the work when I feel in a different mood.

Your somewhat discouraged friend,
New York City, ELIZABETH HARRISON.
February, 1883.

Dear Nell:

Your forbidden letter received, but you should not have written as you did; however, I will answer. Please burn my letter and forget all about it. I will relieve your suspense by stating, first of all, that I am up out of the "slough of despond" and at work again, somewhat more sober, perhaps. Since I was weak enough to write you that discouraged letter, I owe you an explanation. I have received little else save harsh words concerning my friends, and criticisms concerning myself, since I came to this training school. My idols, my precious idols, have been tumbled about my head. I have been told that my schools of work are all wrong, that I must

begin at the beginning and do them all over. No work or lists of work are accepted here. My great Miss Blow has been shown to have erred; my own past mistakes have stared me in the face like a legion of little black devils. Do you wonder that I have grown somewhat disheartened?

Friday morning I was playing in the corner with the children at a sand table, before kindergarten began. Suddenly Madam Kraus called from across the room to me and, pointing to a chair in a corner, told me to go sit in it, at the same time saying to me that I was not fit to be a kindergarten, that I excited the children too much. You can imagine the effect of so overwhelming a condemnation, given in the presence of many of the training class. I silently took the seat apart and remained there until noon, controlling my emotions with much effort. A feeling of deep despair seized me. I was sick at heart. If, after three years of study and practice and conscientious application of every new atom of insight, I was pronounced a failure in teaching, I must give it up. And what then? There was the alternative of marrying a man whom I do not love, or taking an ungraded school in my home county. The thought of going back to my family and acknowledging that I had failed was not to be entertained for a moment. As I walked down Broadway toward my boarding house, the cool sea air blew upon my hot face, and I thought, "Nature at least is kind." But I felt myself flushing each time I thought of the reprimand I had received. On reaching the house, I gave my landlady the excuse of a headache and went directly to my room. I ate no luncheon. After a flood of tears, I sat down before the grate fire which my friend Mrs. Jewett had insisted on adding to my comfort in the boarding-house. All my plans and hopes seemed to be at an end. I had sense enough to know that I could make no wise decision while I was in such a disturbed state of mind; I therefore decided to go over to Boston for a week of sight-seeing before trying to settle upon any plan.

I found relief in packing my trunk, and placing my notebooks in the bottom of it. The next day I was utterly wretched; I knew that before I went away I must see Madam Kraus and have one plain talk with her. I decided to go to her home in the evening, and if she really meant what she said, I would give up once and for all the thought of ever being a kindergartner. When the long day was over, I went with the calmness of desperation to the Kraus home and asked for an interview with Madam Kraus. She greeted me with her usual cordiality. When I began talking she did not seem to understand what I was saying. I repeated her words of the day before, and she seemed utterly amazed, and said, "You must *forgive* me! I knew not what I said yesterday. I only remember I had a blinding headache, and you were making a noise with the children, and I called you off. And now I have made you suffer much, I can see from your face. Can you *forgive* my quick tongue?" The tears stood in her eyes. I told her that it was not so much what she had said, in itself, as that it confirmed what others had said before, and I wanted her to tell me frankly if she thought I could ever have sufficient control over myself to make the right kind of a teacher. She seized my hand and patted it softly, saying, "Yes, yes, you will. You have much in you; I saw that from the first. If you will only stay *wid* me until I train you rightly you will make a fine kindergartner. I say to *Messer* Kraus the other day, 'I must keep Miss Harrison until June.' You are one of these hot-headed Americans, but you will come out all right; oh, dear, oh, dear, to think I should make the poor child suffer!" She seemed to be reproaching herself as she spoke. Then we had a long talk. She told me that I had been humored and petted and made too much of by people about me. She said that I needed discipline. That was why she had several times taken pains to criticise me. But if I did not want her to do so, she could be silent. I, of course, told her I wanted the criticism. All I wanted was to know that I

was not trying to do work for which I was not fitted. She then told me that she often spoke sharply when she was annoyed, but I must not mind it. It was one of her weaknesses, and she hoped that we would understand each other better after this. She urged my remaining until June, promising me, in case I did, to give me a diploma and her highest recommendation. She has urged the same every day since. I wish I could stay; I see more and more her wonderful interpretation of those words: "Educate the child through play." It has been my hero worship of Miss Blow that has stood in my way. Mádám Kraus was so much in earnest in her explanation to me that I frankly told her I could not face the class again without some word of apology from her; she readily agreed, and, accordingly, on the following Monday afternoon, she told the class that she had not intended to be as severe with me as her words implied. She was not conscious, she said, of the strong language she had used; to this she added an earnest and genuine exhortation to the entire class to look upon the work as so sacred that nothing should discourage us. Here the incident dropped.

Yours with love,

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

I have inserted these two old faded letters, which my friend had rescued from oblivion, in order that it may be understood how, from this almost tragic ending of my career, I learned a great lesson which was of much use to me in my later work. When I had a reproof to give to a student, I gave it privately; or if the attention of the class needed to be called to a mistake, I made my application in a general way, giving reasons why it was not best to have done thus and so.

CHAPTER IX

Educational Leaven in Chicago

AFTER having availed myself of study in the chief kindergarten centers of America, I returned to Chicago in the autumn of 1883 and resumed my school work with added life and enthusiasm.

I had a strong conviction that the kindergarten cause could be forwarded to much more satisfactory and helpful ends if the Chicago kindergartners would come together in a club and co-operate in the great movement. I felt that we could secure help from specialists in this or that line of study through lectures. I consulted with Mrs. Putnam on the subject, and we arranged for a meeting to form this club. Every kindergartner in Chicago, twenty in all, responded and all joined the club. Our meetings were held each Saturday morning from nine o'clock until twelve; often they lasted over the noon hour. Several members had been trained in eastern training schools, but they had not studied Froebel's *Mother Play*.

I was elected president and asked to give a course of lessons in this study of the instincts of young children. These lessons continued for five years.¹ The club had a three-year course in vocal music by Eleanor Smith,² who has since attained a national reputation in music for young children. Mrs. Eliza-

¹I was re-elected president for the first six years of the club's existence. Then other work began to press upon me and the presidency passed to Mrs. Putnam, and from that time forth the officers of the club rotated yearly. Two years after my resignation, the pressure of work upon other members of the club made it necessary to discontinue the weekly meetings and to meet once a month.

²Miss Eleanor Smith was a pioneer in the development of music in Chicago. She is best-known through the Music School of Chicago, which she installed.

beth Underhill, a woman of rare culture and wide travel, gave a course of lectures on the building instincts of mankind as shown by the great architecture of the world. She illustrated these lectures with photographs showing the beauty of proportion in building principles which conform to all the great laws of art. I had felt keenly the haphazard use of the kindergarten building blocks and had urged this course, knowing that there was a law underlying all true building. The architecture course continued for two years; then this hour was given to Homer's *Iliad* which, in turn, was followed by the *Odyssey*. The course in the *Odyssey* was selected not only because it is the best known source of fairy tales and folk lore but because it is one of the world's greatest poems. These lectures were given by Dr. Denton J. Snider. This was the beginning of Dr. Snider's literary classes in Chicago, classes which later grew into the "Chicago Literary Schools."

One can judge by such programs of study in these pioneer days how ambitious we were to grasp the best that was obtainable of world culture. Yet we did not overlook practical details, and frequently at noon a group of us would adjourn to a neighboring restaurant and discuss our morning kindergarten experiences. Those were glorious days. Even through the distance of years I recall the thrill of exultation that these Saturday mornings brought, and I feel sure that they had much to do with the enthusiasm which strengthened our faith and caused us to disregard the opposition of many of the older teachers and the indifference of the general public.

As a whole, the Kindergarten Club did valuable work in bringing the kindergartens and the elementary departments of the public schools together, by starting school gardens, stimulating hand-work, organizing story-telling clubs, and urging less crowded rooms with fewer children to a teacher. Each of

the kindergartners helped to promote the cause in her own way. Mrs. Putnam continued her training work and interested a number of women of wealth in establishing church and mission kindergartens. Miss Eva B. Whitmore had charge of the Free Kindergarten Association kindergarten, and demonstrated in a constructive way the value of the kindergarten in the poverty-stricken districts of the city. Miss Mary Boomer, afterwards Mrs. Mary Boomer Page, took charge of the work in social settlements. Miss Nellie Alexander had the kindergarten and what was then called the "connecting class," in a large private school. Miss Annie Bryan placed emphasis upon the better physical culture of the child in her mission kindergartens, and later in her training work. Miss Bertha Payne, later Mrs. Bertha Payne Newell, undertook elementary grade work to demonstrate the value of kindergarten principles throughout the entire period of childhood.*

Mr. Orville T. Bright was the first Chicago school principal who granted the privilege of experimenting, by putting some of our hand-work in the primary grades of a public school. So far as I know, the first organized course of hand-work was given in the public schools of Chicago in 1884. Sometimes I won my way with the teachers by offering to tell stories in the primary grades. It will seem strange to you who read this, that some teachers were willing to have me talk to their children, but were unwilling to have the children actively employed either in games or with hand-work. Remember, however, that in those days education was supposed to consist in accepting information and did not include the child's expression of his own ideas, aided by the teacher's sympathy and larger knowledge.

The Kindergarten Club became one of the recognized factors of the higher life of Chicago. It was an active branch

*Each and all of these women in time became leaders along important lines.

of the International Kindergarten Union, and it co-operated with the greater life of our nation during the World War.⁴ In 1924 it joined several other educational organizations in forming the Central Council of Childhood Education and is still co-operating finely in this wide field of work.

In 1889 another important step in the growth of the kindergarten was taken, when Mrs. Walter Robbins, wife of General Walter R. Robbins, and their only daughter entered the Chicago Kindergarten College. The General soon became interested in their studies, and in his usual prompt, business-like way, suggested that we obtain permission of the Chicago school authorities to put a kindergarten in the public schools as the best means of awakening general attention to this new

⁴Through the courtesy of Miss Mary Morse, Chairman of the Chicago Kindergarten Club War Service Committee, part of the annual report of the war activities of the club in 1917-18 are given as follows:

The original War Service Committee launched its first undertaking at the November meeting, following the very human appeal made by Mrs. Walter Brewster as to the numbers and needs of the Fatherless Children of France.

Due to the inspiration of Miss Harrison, the idea of a Christmas post-card suggesting that the sender was to give her real gift to the children of France was proposed, and met with the unanimous support of the club. A five-dollar prize for a design was offered to the art students of the city and an attractive card was obtained, the result of the combined work of Miriam Pendleton and La Mar Kendall, students of the Art Institute.

The committee's first order to the printer was for five thousand; its final order rounded out fifty-five thousand. An extra meeting was called in December for the purpose of enlarging our sales, and when the chairman, who acted as treasurer, counted up the returns, she had the privilege of turning over to the Chicago Branch of the Fatherless Children of France \$1460.00, a sufficient sum to care for nineteen children for a period of two years each, and two children for one year each. These latter two were individual pledges to take care of one child for a year.

The original War Service Committee has a short report to make in relation to its summer efforts in raising funds for the conservation and protection of the children of France.

On the invitation of the local committee of the International Kindergarten Union, the War Service Committee took upon itself the printing, distribution, and partial collection of pledges and silver offerings presented to Miss Curtis* (towards the maintenance of the Kindergarten Unit at its Silver Anniversary meeting). The day of the anniversary itself, the silver offering amounted to \$1439.16. Later and at different intervals, the chairman of the War Service Committee collected and forwarded \$147.10, making the sum total of the silver offering \$1576.26. She also forwarded \$28.75 in thrift stamps and a pledge of \$12.00, making an additional \$40.75 given directly to the unit.

During the meetings of the International Kindergarten Union, the original War Service Committee launched its second post-card drive, using, through the courtesy of Mr. John McCutcheon, his cartoon issued by the *Chicago Tribune* on Flag Day, called "The Hope of Civilization." During the I. K. U. convention and through the summer when the committee was scattered and less active than usual, it paid the expenses of twenty-five thousand cards, and to date has a balance on hand of \$183.83. In addition it has out in the field about twelve thousand post-cards. The kindergartners of Pittsburgh, Providence, Rochester, and Des Moines are selling them on a forty per cent commission, pledging their commission to the unit. In Chicago, Marshall Fields, Carson Piries, and Mandels have sold them for their own profit, and they are being sold in several places where the commission is being kept for war work.

*Fanniebelle Curtis, Supervisor Greater New York Kindergartens, and at the present time developing kindergarten education in France.

idea of education. When I asked him how we could do it, he answered, "We'll see," and that was all at the time. But he went to his intimate friend, Mr. John McClaren, who was at that time a member of the city school board, and presented the subject to him. With the same directness which her husband had shown, Mrs. Robbins went to the son of A. J. Drexel of Philadelphia, the owner of considerable property on the South Side of Chicago, and laid the matter before him, asking him to furnish the money for the first year's experiment and promising that the kindergarten should be called the "Drexel Kindergarten" in honor of his father. Mr. Drexel agreed to do this, and he remained an annual contributor to the work until it was taken over by the school board.

In the records of the Chicago Historical Society is found the following paragraph: "The first kindergarten to which the Board of Education gave a room was opened in 1889. It was placed and supported by the Drexel Kindergarten Association, until taken under the control of the public schools in 1892." The victory—and it was a signal one, because the project was opposed by some of the aldermen—was due largely to Mr. McClaren, General Robbins, and his wife.

Mrs. Lucretia Willard Treat, an experienced kindergartner, a niece of the famous educator, Emily Willard, was placed in this kindergarten as director. My heart beat high. We were demonstrating the practicability of my dream—the beginning of "a kindergarten for every school in America and every young child in the kindergarten." But this flickering little rush light had to be sheltered and watched over with much care and anxiety. The mother-members of the Drexel Kindergarten, composed largely of my South-Side mothers, did valiant work in raising the needed money for carrying it on. Janitor service had not been included in the permit given, and the cadets volunteered to wash windows and keep the floor clean by sweeping it each noon with damp sawdust.

White muslin curtains and potted plants were donated, and I, personally, had the great joy of hanging the first pictures on the walls of this Drexel Kindergarten. These were, if I remember rightly, the first pictures that were hung on the walls of a Chicago public-school room. They were some of the water color reprints of beautiful landscapes which I had bought in London, in 1896 for our mission kindergartens. That same autumn Miss Ellen Starr, of Hull House, gave some art photographs to a neighboring public school. You, who are accustomed to architecturally designed school buildings, whose walls glow with beautiful pictures, furnished by public-school art societies, cannot know the joy these early efforts brought.

In the autumn of 1884, feeling myself now a part of the growing life of Chicago, I proceeded at once to bring into my environment the larger interpretation of life which had so inspired me in St. Louis. I began a free class in Froebel's *Mother Play* in one of the mission kindergartens located on the second floor of a dingy old building in a dismal part of the city, and invited all kindergartners who cared to take the work to come into the class. Only six or eight young girls responded, but the sheer joy of sharing the great thought-world, of which I had gained glimpses, was so keen that I often returned home with the feeling of being shod with wings.

This was the beginning of a much more significant work. Knowing that I needed more co-operation, I asked Mrs. Lucretia Willard Treat to assist me in some of the classes, and also Josephine Locke, who at that time was inspiring the public schools with a realization that "self-expression," the essential in all art, should begin in early childhood. The latter was much help in teaching the students appreciation of harmony in color, and proportion in the use of the building blocks and in the clay work. This study of art principles led

the adult student into almost childlike delight in the use of plastic materials.

In the autumn of 1886, I succeeded in getting twenty of the young mothers of my acquaintance to guarantee a class for Dr. Snider in the interpretation of great literature. Our first venture in this line was a course of twenty lessons—two a week—beginning with Homer's *Iliad*. At the end of this course, I succeeded in securing the election, as regular associate members of the Chicago Kindergarten Club, of the mothers who had attended the Homer lectures. This addition to the club considerably increased its financial possibilities without altering in any way its purpose. The following April and May, Dr. Snider conducted another course, this time in Homer's *Odyssey*. Much enthusiasm was created by his significant way of interpreting the great world-poets. These lectures were given under the auspices of the Chicago Kindergarten Club, of which I was then president. Dr. Snider agreed to return in the autumn of 1887 for an extended course of lectures on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, if we could organize at the end of the course a "literary school," for a week's session, and invite the leading Dante scholars of America to take part in it, each to give two or three lectures, and all speakers to remain throughout the week and take part in the discussions. The club accepted Dr. Snider's offer and decided to hold the first literary school during Christmas week, and to offer each of the lecturers one hundred dollars a lecture. Dr. Snider declined any payment for his part in the novel enterprise, but he accepted the chairmanship of the meetings. The lecturers were engaged and the plans went forward.

As I now look back upon the undertaking, it seems to have been a risky one—for a handful of women to attempt to arouse a great commercial city to the profound significance of the message of a poet who had been dead six hundred years, although acknowledged as the world's greatest interpreter of the Christian religion. A prominent Chicago

woman, a literary authority, visiting in Cleveland just previous to the opening of our Literary School, read in the Cleveland papers enthusiastic accounts of the plan for this course of lectures. She exclaimed, "Who is this irresponsible person undertaking to hold a Dantean school in Chicago!" She returned home in time to attend the first session, and she attended every session, not only of the first Literary School but of all that followed.

Railroad rates were secured for visitors from the schools and colleges of other cities and states. Members of the club sold tickets and competed in their Saturday morning reports as to the number of tickets sold. But when the night of the opening of the Literary School came, we still lacked two hundred dollars to meet expenses. The school was to be held in a lecture hall of the Art Institute, the capacity of which was about four hundred. I shall never forget the sense of relief and exultation we experienced as the hall was gradually filled to overflowing with an eager assembly of intelligent and wide-awake people. They came from as far west as Denver, as far east as Philadelphia, and included presidents, professors, and teachers from representative colleges and schools in neighboring cities.

The entire press of Chicago was won over to the undertaking. The daily papers faithfully reported the main themes and some of the clever discussions, giving a column or more to the subject each day. Whatever may be said against Chicago, no one can accuse her newspapers of lack of interest and energy in promoting anything that may add to her reputation as a great and growing city. The very uniqueness, at that time, of a convention of literary men and women, called together from all parts of the country to discuss subjects as remote from politics, business, and philanthropy as Dante's *Divine Comedy*, was to the newspapers worth noting, and they reported it generously. Soon the newspapers of other cities began giving space for the enterprise, some commending and

some ridiculing it. Neighboring criticisms merely increased the enthusiastic reports of the Chicago papers. This genuine interest and willingness of our home papers to give space to the reports lasted through the annual sessions of the eight years of the Literary Schools. In time we learned to write the reports ourselves, as the average reporter complained that it took too much of his time to read up on the subjects, and the managing editors could not always spare the time of their literary writers for our lengthy sessions.

One amusing interview will show why this seemed best. On the night of the opening session of the Literary School of which Shakespeare was the subject, a dapper young reporter called for me just as the audience was coming in. He looked me over from head to foot, then inquired: "Are you the woman who is running this show?" "No," I replied, "it's being held under the auspices of the Chicago Kindergarten College." He looked a bit dubious, and then said, "Well, I was told to come over here and report it—and, hang it! I don't know anything about the old fellow. He's a chestnut anyhow, has been dead a hundred or more years, hasn't he? Why in the dickens, don't you pick up some live fellow like Mark Twain or Kipling?" "Because," I said quietly, "we want to study the writings of the men whose views are important enough to have interested thoughtful people for hundreds of years. Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling have not yet been tested by eight or ten or twenty generations of people." "Oh, say now," he began again, "you could get a lots bigger crowd if you would take up some snappy fellow." He added, "I haven't got time to hunt up anything new about this old chestnut!" At that moment he saw Professor David Swing, Chicago's beloved literary leader, entering the hall. "Say, hello, there's Swing! There must be something in it. By George! I can't report this thing. Won't you write up something about it? I'll call at ten o'clock and get your stuff." By that time he had begun to look distressed, and I

promised that a report would be ready for him. Later I laughingly told Professor Swing that he had done one more fine service for Chicago by saving Shakespeare from being called a chestnut in one of our leading papers. Then I told him of my interview with the reporter. How he laughed!

Dr. Thomas Davidson, whom the *London Times* called one of the twelve most learned men of his generation, was one of the lecturers in our Literary School. After the first lecture, he said to a friend, "Who would have believed that such an audience could have been gathered in Chicago! Its intelligence, as seen in the discussions, is as remarkable as its size."

We really had brought together a surprising number of scholarly thinkers. Nothing in all my later professional life ever gave me such intense satisfaction as did the success of our Chicago renaissance in the classics, partly because deep down in my heart I had to keep under control the fear of failure, and partly because it proved that our city had educated citizens able and willing to assist in a study of the world's best literature. The Middle West was still looked upon by the literati of the East as a pioneer district, and Chicago as a barbarian of lusty growth. Our new University was spoken of as one of Rockefeller's new commercial enterprises. Our beloved Art Institute, of which we are today so proud, was a small affair, having as yet received but meager endowment. The Lewis Institute was in the first years of its remarkable growth and influence. The Columbian Exposition had not yet been visioned. The Field Museum and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra were only dreams in the minds of a few.

The second Literary School selected the writings of Goethe as its theme. Classes in the study of *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister* were formed in the autumn, preparatory to the session which was again to be held during the holiday of 1888. Because of the more complex nature of Goethe's philosophy and because of the fact that the novelty of the enterprise had worn off, the interest of some of the members of the Kindergarten

Club flagged. However, the school was again successful, and it was decided that we should select Shakespeare for the third Literary School, and that the time of meeting should be changed to the Easter vacation. In order to carry it through, the Chicago Kindergarten College had to guarantee the funds, and the remaining schools were held under our auspices.

Each succeeding Literary School brought new scholars to aid in the work. Dr. William T. Harris, then U. S. Commissioner of Education, was with us throughout the eight years. Dr. David Swing was one of our speakers until his death in 1893. Mrs. Caroline K. Sherman, a leading member of the Chicago Woman's Club, and other literary celebrities also contributed scholarly papers at each School. At the first Homer lecture, Superintendent George C. Howland, of the Chicago public schools, read his own translation of the first and ninth books of the *Iliad*. It was in hexameter and charmingly rendered. Mr. Hamilton Mabie, of the *Outlook*, was one of our regular speakers. Professor Calvin Thomas, of Michigan University, was another valuable addition, and the discussions included other well-known students of the classics.

After two or three of these Literary Schools had proved successful in drawing to them year after year audiences of more than ordinary culture, Mr. Henry B. Fuller, the novelist, in an article in the *Forum* concerning the new intellectual life of Chicago, referred to the new University, the Art Institute, the Academy of Science, Lewis Institute, and the Chicago Kindergarten College as evidences of its developing culture.

We were soon in correspondence with various colleges, and demands for my lectures increased. By 1894 the work of our training school had grown to the extent that it taxed me to keep up with the demands of the school and with the requests for outside lectures and newspaper and magazine articles on the newer methods of education. Dr. Snider had finished writing his commentaries on the four great world poets, and was eager for new work. It was therefore decided that this,

the eighth Literary School, should close the series, that its main theme should be the Homeric poems, but that the scope of these should be broadened to include the subject of mythology in general. We also decided that our future work in literature should be a three years' course of lectures on the great world poets as a part of the cultural course for our students and for any outside students who wished to join the classes.

Of course, we were severely criticised for giving such "stiff stuff" as the great world poets, the philosophy of history, the meaning and messages of the great arts of the world, and a study of the ethical basis of sociology, to young girls scarcely out of their teens who had come to us to learn how to play with little children. But I was convinced from my own experience of the value of even a limited contact with the culture that had inspired the higher civilization of mankind, and the assurance it brought of the one eternal law on which all practical religion is based. The testimony given by many of our graduates, years later, as to the help that this study had been to them fully justified the course we pursued. It convinced me that the best is none too good for the teacher who holds her work a high and holy calling. Newer methods and better technical details have been added as they proved practical. But nothing can take the place of a rich inner life with the joy it brings which makes the young soul mount in winged flight as the years add responsibilities, to run and not be weary, and, when the physical powers gradually become exhausted, to walk and not faint. A teacher so endowed goes on her way rejoicing, helping every ardent aspiration of those about her. I know whereof I speak. I could mention scores of them. Some of my students have turned to art, some to social-settlement work, some have gone out as missionaries, and to other lines of service, and best of all, many have married and are bringing up true and noble sons and daughters. These have confirmed me in my conviction that the true teacher needs con-

tinually to become familiar with the most beautiful forms of literature, the highest expression of art, and the deepest insight into history; to feel an interest in advancing discoveries in science; and to clear her mind of mean and petty things by learning to love great music and every phase of beauty in nature.

We announced the last Literary School as a "school of mythology." It brought to us such authorities as Dr. G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University; Dr. Hugo Munsterburg, of Harvard; Dr. Richard G. Moulton, of Cambridge, England, better known as a lecturer and writer on the literary study of the Bible; again, Mr. Hamilton Mabie, of the *Outlook*; Professor David Swing; our beloved Dr. Harris; Mrs. Caroline K. Sherman, and other speakers.

A few days after the close of this last session, I was coming down from Hyde Park to the heart of the city. President Harper of our new University was in the same car and came over and sat down beside me. After a few general remarks concerning the weather he said, "Miss Harrison, I have a very personal question which I wish to ask you. Will you tell me just what this school of mythology cost you?" "Certainly," I replied; "we spent fifteen hundred dollars." "Did it pay?" he asked quickly. "Within two hundred dollars," I answered, "and we counted that as two hundred dollars' worth of advertisement for the school." "I should say so!" he ejaculated; then after a minute or two of silence he added, "How did you do it?" I laughed and replied, "We tried to furnish something that was as nearly first-class as possible." He joined in the laugh and said some complimentary things concerning our pluck.

It was a fine ending of a courageous undertaking, and incidentally brought added reputation for thoroughness and high purpose to our College.

CHAPTER X

Mothers' Classes

IT took courage for me to decide to undertake a class for mothers in the study of the truer and deeper significance of the kindergarten. But the decision once made, I hesitated no longer and laid my plans before several friends. One or two mildly encouraged it, but most of them laughed at it as a bit of over-enthusiasm on my part. One dearly-loved friend said, "Of all foolish dreams this one seems to be the most foolish. What woman who has actually given birth to a child would listen to you for five minutes—you, an unmarried, childless woman?" However, my conviction that there were certain truths and definite facts in this plan for early education which would help mothers in their home life to more clearly understand their children, spurred me on. I knew that the average parent was ignorant of the laws of human growth. I knew that many good people had moral principles and religious convictions, but even they seemed to have only vague ideas of the importance of the wise development of the emotional life of the young child. I knew that out of the emotions ideals arise which help much in the growth of self-control and in the beginning of the power to reason. I knew that this desired growth of children could be greatly aided by leading them into self-expression through suitable play and manual work. I had also come to realize that the average child needed a greater variety of experiences than ordinarily came into his young life. I had learned that the little child needed early the companionship of other children of his own age to lessen selfish egotism and to develop kindly interest in the lives of others. This is the beginning of the much-needed spirit of community life.

I felt that I was in need of the help of these mothers, if I was to do my best work with their children. Therefore, in the fall of 1884, with the permission of Mrs. Loring, the principal of our school, I sent out invitations to "my mothers" asking them to meet me the first Tuesday afternoon in October to discuss the educational significance of the kindergarten in the wholesome development of child life and to arrange for some form of co-operative endeavor.

The day came which—though I did not know it at the time—marked my entrance into thirty-five years of unremitting and strenuous work, but work which overflowed with joy of growth and the satisfaction of real service. I had sent invitations to twenty-one mothers. Two came. I can recall even yet the struggle to conceal my disappointment from these two mothers, and the effort it was to talk with them just as if I had not expected a class of fifteen or twenty. I think I must have been buoyed up by the hope that the other mothers would surely come into the class after I had had a chance to talk with them personally about the need of co-operation between us. But the hope was doomed. When I broached the subject, some of them promised to come but did not keep their promise. Some frankly admitted that they were too busy with other matters. One, two, or three, who later attended my first large class for mothers—and they were the hardest to bear with—would pat me on the shoulder and assure me that they were perfectly satisfied with what I was doing for their children, and tell me of some compliment they had heard concerning my work.¹

There were times during the first years of my experiment when I felt so desperately the need of some intelligent mother's advice and experience that I would be seized with a mad desire to stop on a crowded down-town street corner

¹Some day when more mothers have learned that one of the most important contributions they can make to life is the intelligent study of influences which have been beneficial and of those which have been detrimental to the development of their children in the pre-school age, there will be hundreds of records by means of which we may better study that most marvelous of all phenomena in our universe, the growth of a soul in a human body.

and shout aloud that a new day was dawning for childhood and a new era for motherhood. Then my sense of humor would picture the shock this would give to my friends and my possible arrest by some policeman, and I would subside.

I know now that I needed more preparation, more experience and clearer insight, and that my timidity in not insisting on their help was nature's wise provision. So the two mothers and I went bravely on. A little later three young girls joined the group. There were no charges for my time. Such an idea as earning money by charging for educating mothers had not entered into my plans. All I wanted was help in guiding the children aright, both in the school and the home. The young girls were not much help in such guidance, but they added to the interest and enthusiasm of the work, and I soon began giving them extra technical work in a two years' course of preparation for kindergartens of their own. Kindergartens were not put in the public schools of Chicago until 1889.

One day, in the following April, an attractive-looking woman came into my class room, seated herself and motioned me to go on with my talk. When the work of the afternoon was over, she came to me and introduced herself as Mrs. John N. Crouse, the mother of one of the boys in the primary grade. She then asked me if I would walk part the way home with her as she wanted to talk with me concerning the afternoon lesson. We walked along silently for a time; then Mrs. Crouse turned to me and said, "A hundred mothers ought to have heard what you said this afternoon." She paused, but in a moment added, "They shall hear it." It was the first ring of genuine co-operative propaganda that had come to me and my heart gave an inarticulate shout. Nothing more was said on the subject. She turned to other topics and we parted at the next corner. At that time I did not know the woman. Her eloquence of pleading, her dauntless courage that faced all obstacles as mere incidents to be

expected in any great work, and her power of perseverance that simply refused to accept failure—these great virtues were all revealed to me later. Nor did I realize that they were to be dedicated to the cause of conscious motherhood.

The same week she called on every woman in her church with whom she was acquainted and invited them all to come to their church parlors a certain afternoon the next week. She had previously obtained a promise from me to be present and explain to these ladies the significance of the kindergarten. She wrote a notice of the meeting and asked her pastor to announce it at the following Sunday morning and evening service.²

At the appointed hour and place the two large church parlors were comfortably filled with women. I came near having stage fright. I began my talk standing, but my knees were trembling so I had to ask for a chair, and the rest of my somewhat embarrassed discourse was given in a sitting posture, with my hands nervously twisting my handkerchief into a rope, and untwisting it again. When I had ended, Mrs. Crouse arose, and in her quiet, dignified manner announced that a class would be formed to meet in the church parlors every afternoon for the next week and that she hoped all the mothers would join the class. The terms would be two dollars and fifty cents for the course. Mrs. B— would be secretary and treasurer of the class. She announced that one-

²Mrs. Crouse was a woman of wide influence in her denomination, and anything she asked to have done usually was done. No explanation of this new work had been made to her pastor, and as a result he was amused by the announcement. After reading it as it was written, he shrugged his shoulders, lifted his eyebrows, and turned to one of his gray-haired deacons and said, "Brother Jones, as you are the proud father of eleven children, perhaps it would be well if you join Miss Harrison's class and learn how to bring up your children." Of course, there was some little laughter, but Mrs. Crouse was so sincerely respected that there was not much response to the gibe. The clergyman afterwards apologized to her, adding, "To me, it seems the most absurd idea I ever heard of—a childless woman undertaking to instruct mothers."

Three years later, this same clergyman came to me for help in solving the problem of an exceedingly attractive young girl, who had been left alone and penniless. He asked me to find a home for her which would allow her time for kindergarten training, frankly admitting that it seemed to him the only thing interesting enough to attract her from the reckless social circle into which she had drifted, and which, he feared, would lead to a failure in life. I have given this account of the skepticism of an unusually clever man to show something of the prejudices and apathy with which we early-day kindergartners had to contend. It is but one of the many instances that I can recall. It was years before even my own family saw the significance of the great movement into which I had thrown myself, body, mind, and soul.



Mrs. John N. Crouse, Pioneer in Mothers' Classes and Co-Principal
Chicago Kindergarten College, 1887-1912

half of the proceeds would be given to the Ladies Aid Society and one-half to Miss Harrison. The announcement was a complete surprise to me. Forty-five of the women joined the class, and I received sixty dollars as my part of the experiment. But the money, an unexpected compensation, was a minor matter compared with the courage and faith in my conviction which the class brought.

In the fall and throughout the school year of 1885 and 1886 I was invited to speak in various private school and church organizations—east, west, north and south—in Chicago. Five regular courses for mothers were given, numbering in all seven hundred and thirty-four members. I gave some individual lectures also in neighboring suburbs. This was an active year, as I had also my kindergarten and what had developed into a regular training class of young girls at the Loring school, then known as the Miss Harrison Training Class.

Much of my preparation of work was done on the long street-car rides to and from my mothers' classes in various parts of the city; thus my power of concentration was strengthened, and this has been of great service to me ever since.

As I developed broader and more definite lines of thought, I was filled with a consuming desire to help other teachers and mothers realize the greatness of their calling. Is it not always so? The teacher, the artist, the scientist, the discoverer of truth in any of its forms is eager to share it with others. Spiritual possessions are always the richer for thus being shared. It is only when we grow unduly hungry for material possessions or personal fame that we become selfish and unwilling to give. I began to understand that all who had the care of little children needed to know something of the rudimentary instincts and impulses that are in the hearts of all children in order to help the growth of the higher instincts. More than this, the ideals established in childhood

have helped many a soul to rise out of degradation and begin a new life. Almost as a necessity I began mothers' classes. From these grew a class for teachers, and before I was fully conscious of it I had organized a training school for teachers and mothers, with my own school for observation and practice.

Although Mrs. Crouse assisted me in the training-class work during the year 1886, she did not officially join me until the autumn of 1887, when we decided to change the name from Miss Harrison's Training Class to The Chicago Kindergarten Training School. The work grew rapidly, and the next year we concentrated all classes for mothers at a central location, the Art Institute, which was still in its embryonic stage, and its business manager was glad to rent us an assembly hall. We met here two mornings each week, one with the first-, and one with the second-year classes for mothers. All the training work for teachers and mothers was given at the Art Institute. Thus freed from the long rides in crowded street cars going to and from mothers' classes in various parts of the city, I soon utilized the time saved by accepting an invitation to give two courses of lectures in Milwaukee, an evening class with public-school teachers and a morning class with mothers. These courses were organized in 1889, and—if I remember rightly—lasted fifteen weeks. One day each week after eleven-thirty o'clock I left my kindergarten in care of my assistant, had an early luncheon, met my training class from one to two-thirty, and took the three o'clock train for Milwaukee, arriving at six. From seven-thirty to nine-thirty I met with two hundred teachers for games, stories, and handwork. They were an earnest and enthusiastic class and often detained me after the period was ended. However, these after-class periods caused me to make simpler and more practical my explanation of work, which I probably would not have done unaided by the experience of

other teachers. Although these lectures sometimes taxed me, I have always been grateful for them.

The next morning, at ten-thirty o'clock, I met with a class of three hundred mothers in the study of Froebel's *Mother-Play*, the basis of which is *mother love awakens pious feeling, mother play awakens noble doing, and mother song awakens clear thinking*. In other words this theory was what would now be called the study of the preschool age. I began each lesson with the explanation of some normal instinct in the infant, its significance, and how to guard and aid in its development. This naturally led into problems of boyhood and girlhood. It often carried us into the later problems of adolescence. There are no sharp divisions between the stages of childhood, boyhood, and youth, but a gradual growth out of one into the next. New interests and desires awaken, but old instincts, as old as the records of time, remain. This is why it has always seemed to me vital to emphasize the early childhood period. I had a responsive class which surprised and delighted me, and in consequence I usually boarded my one o'clock train for Chicago inspired and refreshed, proving the truth of the saying, "The labor we delight in physics pain."

The financial returns from these two classes, in addition to what the Chicago classes now brought, helped us materially in our training school, though we were often dangerously near the end of our bank account. The demands for lectures here and there were constantly coming in, and thus we were enabled to continue the high standard we had set for our work. Incidentally, I was trained into a ready and evidently popular speaker, although through all the years of public speaking that followed I do not remember having gone before a new and untried audience without a nerve-racking dread lest I should fail to give my message effectively. About this time, the leading newspapers of Chicago began regularly reporting my Wednesday morning lectures to

mothers. These reports, of course, added to the general reputation of the school. In 1890 a three years' course of lectures for mothers was planned as a distinct department of the College with certificates and diplomas granted, including a wider range of subjects, some of which pertained to the school life of the child.

In the spring of 1893 I had the great joy of graduating this class of twenty-three earnest and wide-awake mothers. There is no memory more dear to me in my professional life than that of their lingering after their last lesson, just before the Christmas holidays, waiting until a few casual visitors had left to present me with a full set—eight volumes—of Fergusson's *History of Architecture*. My art study since then has taken me far beyond Fergusson, but nothing can exceed the joy which comes to me each time I read those twenty-three names inscribed on the fly-leaf of the first volume of this set of books. These earnest mothers had been so faithful in their attendance and had shown such intelligent sympathy and co-operation in their new and untried line of work that I cannot have other than the tenderest and most affectionate memory of them all. Naturally, this group and I developed an intimate friendship, and at the end of their third-year course, in 1893, they gathered around me and asked, "What more can we do to help forward the life of all children? We feel that we understand our own children so much better now, and we want to be of help to other mothers." My heart sang for joy. I had long felt that we could but inadequately nurture the child beyond the preschool age, unless mothers and teachers could work together. It now seemed that my dream was to come true. I asked these mothers if each one would be willing to visit some one of the public schools, get acquainted with the teachers, and find the way to be of most help in making school-life more attractive and the school-rooms brighter. I suggested that each mother could add to the room a pot of blooming flowers, a picture for the

wall or bring a poem to be read to the children or a story to be told. Perhaps sometimes a discouraged teacher might be cheered by an invitation to luncheon or dinner or, possibly, a matinee or concert. I added that nothing they could do would be of more value than to show a public-school teacher that they looked upon her as a human being, and not merely as an employee of the school board.

Most of the mothers entered heartily into the plan. One or two, doubting their own ability, hesitated, but a few earnest words concerning the barrenness of the school-rooms in our city and the real need of human sympathy, which many teachers showed in their faces, persuaded even the most timid to promise to become a visitor, at least once a month, to some one of the public schools. I told them that I would see the superintendent of the public schools and ask him to name the schools which most needed this kind of help and that I would try to send each of them to a school near her own home. We would come together once a month and compare notes as to the work done, thus gaining courage and inspiration to go forward toward our new ideal of better homes, better schools, and happier childhood. Then we shook hands and parted; and I, my heart aglow with what seemed to me to be the realization of a great ideal, hastened over to the city superintendent's office. I could hardly keep from dancing along the street, I was so filled with the joy of the thought. Fortunately, I found Mr. Lane alone in his office, and, as we were personal friends, I eagerly laid before him our plan. He listened attentively until I had finished, and then said quietly, "I am sorry to disappoint you, but the plan is utterly impossible." I undoubtedly looked astonished at his words, for he added, "You do not know what you ask. There are conditions in some of our schools which are deplorable and can only be remedied by slow process. These mothers could not understand why such conditions could not at once be changed. There are teachers in some of our schools who are

entrenched by political influences, and these would indignantly resent any intrusion upon their work by a non-official person. Then, too, your trained mothers might wish to introduce a subject or some method which would upset the plans worked out by experienced principals and assistant superintendents. I am sorry, but I cannot possibly give my permission."

He was so kind and gentle in his refusal that I left him without any feeling of resentment, but with a discouraged heart. My feet felt as heavy as lead as I slowly retraced my steps. All my bright hopes and plans lay shattered before me.

Keenly disappointed and much discouraged, I returned to 10 East Van Buren Street. After more than ten years of intense study and work I seemed to have failed.

I know now that I made three mistakes. One was in not sending a committee of mothers to the superintendent in order that he might realize their earnestness of purpose and their intelligence, which might have overcome some of the difficulties he feared. However, they might not have succeeded, as the great educational awakening had not at that time begun in our midst.

Colonel Francis Parker, educational pioneer, had not yet shaken his fist in the face of a self-satisfied school board. Dewey, Nichols, Wirt, and other educators had not demonstrated the value of freer, more creative work in our schools. My chief thought was to give to this group of mothers an opportunity for added growth which would come to them through community work, to take them outside of their own narrow social circles, and at the same time acquaint them with some of the depressing conditions existing in dingy school-rooms in the gloomy sections of our city. I knew how earnestly they would try to better these conditions.

My second mistake was that I did not plan to send each mother to the school attended by her own children. A re-



Chicago Shakespeare College 11 West Van Buren Street, Chicago, 1895-1907
(Buildings have since been extensively altered and Third Floor)

quest of this nature could hardly have been denied me by the superintendent.

My third mistake was made in not asking for the vital help of the fathers who were interested in the better education of their children. Such a thought had not dawned upon me. I did not adequately understand the value that such co-operation would bring. Nor was its value perceived by others until some years after the organization of the National Congress of Mothers. In fact, it had its real awakening when the Parent-Teacher Association united with the Congress of Mothers.

Before I knew it, I was definitely committed to the work of training teachers, work which resulted, with the generous help of others, in a permanent school for the training of teachers and mothers in the clearer understanding of how to cultivate the better emotions of their children; how to deal wisely with growing young wills; how to satisfy children's insatiable hunger for more knowledge of the world about them; and, more than all else, how to develop gradually a conscious wonder concerning the great invisible creative power surrounding us on every side, and turn this wonder into a loving reverence that recognized this power as, "Our Father who art in heaven."

Out of these mothers' and teachers' classes grew the Chicago Kindergarten College, later incorporated as the National Kindergarten College and, still later, the National Kindergarten and Elementary College.

Do you wonder that sometimes in those early days I felt like stopping on the crowded streets and crying aloud my message as did the Salvation Army sisters? I was saved from fanaticism by knowing that all great movements are of slow growth and must be demonstrated. One cannot work successfully for a great cause without a vast amount of patience with an indifferent public which has not awakened to the true significance of the cause; without a willingness to sub-

merge all desire for personal recognition if thereby the cause can be advanced. Both of these natural impulses of impatience with people who do not understand our viewpoint and of personal ambition are subordinate if the cause is large enough to embrace the welfare of humanity.

It matters little now how arduous were the tasks of those early days. The National Parent Teachers Association, numbering over a million members, with branches in every state in the Union, is fully awake to the importance of parental education. Many of our leading universities have awakened to the call of childhood, and courses covering almost every phase of child education are being formed. Far be it from me to claim more than the kindling of a small brush-wood fire which might have flickered out but for the work of scientists, educators, clergymen, popular writers, psychologists, and, best of all, thousands of intelligent parents and worth-while teachers. All of these have contributed their share to this great movement of our day, the sympathetic and scientific study of children.

CHAPTER XI

Kindergarten Education in Germany

IN the autumn of 1889 there came into my kindergarten a beautiful young woman who introduced herself as a graduate of Frau Schrader's Kindergarten Training Class in Berlin. I welcomed her cordially, of course, and after my kindergarten closed, we had an hour of earnest talk concerning the European phases of kindergarten work. I found her very intelligent and much in earnest. Therefore, when a few days later, she again came to ask if she might enter my third year of training work, as she had been strongly advised to get the American interpretation of Froebel, I was much pleased to accept her. I felt that, in all probability, I would learn as much from her as she would learn in my classes. As she had had two years of training and practice in Frau Schrader's kindergarten, I placed her in charge of a small group of children, giving her a suggestion of work which I had planned but telling her to use her own judgment in her work with them.

In a few days I noticed a marked difference between her teaching and that to which we were accustomed. My plan called for a lesson in sand modeling, in which various geometric surfaces were to be impressed in the sand, making forms of beauty or anything else the children might suggest. I found that the new student had brought with her a bunch of pansies, and the children were making flower gardens in geometric shapes, each selecting the color of pansy he or she desired to use. The children, of course, were delighted. A few days later the program called for building with blocks. Her children were allowed to go to the cupboard and select their own blocks. Each child used his blocks to enclose a room of his

own choice, furnishing it with imaginary furniture. I heard her exclaim, "None of you have built a kitchen! What would the family do without a kitchen?" Of course, the children at once wanted to change their rooms into kitchens. Just how she settled that problem I have forgotten. For the next day or two they were busy making chairs, tables, and beds, one day modeling them in clay, another day making them of stiff paper, with little regard for the size or shape of the paper. Later on she introduced toy animals. Please remember that this was in 1889, when a doll and a bed were the only toys permitted in the kindergartens. My children were allowed much freedom in the use of material. Following their free play they were given fifteen minutes' dictation with the use of Froebel's geometric materials. I had several long talks with the young lady, in some of which she explained to me her understanding of Frau Schrader's reason for introducing material which was not definitely geometric in form, and also for allowing several kinds of material to be used in one project. All this was new to me, although I had, in my mothers' classes, very strongly recommended for home occupation blackboard and chalk, dolls' houses, small tables and tea sets, and like reproductions of domestic activities; and still more strongly had urged much out-of-door life with swings, sand piles, and a load of kindling wood, and, if possible, the care of a cat, dog, or chickens. But I had been taught in the three centers of kindergarten work, Chicago, St. Louis, and New York, that the period set apart in the kindergarten for what was then called table work—now termed manual activity—*must* be strictly devoted to leading the child to perceive the underlying geometric structure of all form.

Frau Schrader was a niece of Froebel and had lived a year and a half in his home while she was taking her kindergarten training. I learned later that she had traveled with the Baroness von Marenholz-Bulow to almost every court in Europe to present the kindergarten cause to crowned-heads and prime

ministers. I did not agree with Frau Schrader's young graduate. It seemed to me that she was scattering the child's attention instead of concentrating it. However, I made up my mind that I must go to Germany and look personally into the Berlin work.

Fortified with a letter of introduction from Frau Schrader's former student, I wrote asking permission to join her class the following summer, and I received ready consent. Mrs. Crouse decided to go with me, when she realized that I was determined upon this visit to see the Berlin kindergarten work. She was in full sympathy with my desire to get as near as possible to a clearer comprehension of the thought which was at the center of this new method of education. The first week of the following June we set sail for Europe. To my surprise and delight I found awaiting me on shipboard, a formal official letter bearing the United States seal of authority, and stating that I was visiting Germany in research work concerning new methods of the education of young children, and that any courtesy shown me by the government of Germany would be duly appreciated by the government of the United States.

On arriving at Antwerp, we found a cordial letter of welcome from Frau Schrader, urging our coming immediately to Berlin, as she was in the midst of some work which she would like to have us see. We were soon settled in the comfortable apartment of Herr Professor Pittener, only a block and a half from Pestalozzi-Froebel House, which was the center of all Frau Schrader's work. We found Frau Schrader herself a remarkable woman of charming personality and with simple, fresh, unaffected manners. It was soon arranged that Mrs. Crouse and her two sons should spend their mornings in the study of German with Herr Professor Pittener, or in excursions about the city. During the afternoons when I was free, we visited the picture galleries, made excursions to historic spots in Berlin, and otherwise enjoyed the tourist's activities. I observed the work at the morning session of the kinder-

garten, which began at eight o'clock and closed after the children's dinner hour at twelve-thirty in the afternoon. I attended the afternoon classes in physical culture, games, hand-work, and singing. I was not sufficiently familiar with the German language to follow the lessons on theory; so Frau Schrader generously arranged that I should have two hours of work, three afternoons a week with her niece Fräulein Henrietta Hartmann, who read aloud from certain books of Herbart and one or two other German educators with whose theory she wished me to become familiar. Miss Hartmann was a delightful young girl and read in perfect English from the German text without a moment of hesitancy. She also frequently read from Frau Schrader's manuscript lectures. After these hours, from two to four o'clock, I went to Frau Schrader's office for examination on the same and for discussion on points where I did not agree with the author. During these delightful hours she frequently branched off into anecdotes concerning Froebel. She told much of his early life and later work.¹ She did not hesitate to criticise him for his careless manner of dressing and his lack of business ability. But she praised his earnestness and depth of thought.

¹She told me that soon after the printing of the *Mother Play* book she went to Blankenburg to visit Frau Middendorf. Shortly after her arrival, Frau Middendorf produced a copy of the book, saying, "Well, here is Froebel's new book, the *Mother Play*. It cost such a lot of money, and" shaking her head sadly, "it will never in the world pay for itself, never! But Froebel would have it." Here we see the resolute seed-planting amid clouds of doubt and cold winds of criticism—and what already has been the harvest!

Not only has the book been translated into the Russian, the French and the English, but it has crossed the Atlantic, and thousands upon thousands of mothers and kindergartners have studied it and have gained inspiration from it as from few other sources. It has passed on to far Japan, where its somewhat crude illustrations have been transformed with pictures of more pleasing lines. But it has done more than this. It has evolved as well as multiplied. Other books inspired by its message have been translated into four and five foreign tongues. And this is but the beginning of the long list of books which will be begotten by it, so pregnant is it with vital thought.

Some day, I doubt not it will be said—in a lesser degree—of Froebel what Mr. Dooley said of Homer. When told that a millionaire famous for building libraries disapproved of the great Greek poet, the Archer Avenue philosopher replied, "Homer didn't build any libraries, but he has filled a lot of them." But this seed thought has done more than start a never-ending line of commentaries. It has awakened the mother-hearts all over our land, and mother-classes, mother-clubs, mother-associations, and National Congress of Parent-Teachers have sprung up, not differing from the original germ, save in size and varying degrees of comprehension of the central thought; namely, that each child has a divine nature to be nourished, yet always according to the Divine Law, rationally, not capriciously. Child-study clubs have sprung up among pedagogues, and even our conservative churches and Sunday schools are beginning to realize that there is need of earnest scientific training in their work of awakening the child to his spiritual inheritance.

I soon found that, to her, Herbart had transcended Froebel by his more definite and practical objective. She strongly urged my studying more thoroughly the writings of Herbart and William Ellis, the English philanthropist. Much of her teaching seemed to me to be extremely utilitarian. The children washed their own tables, dusted the chairs, cleaned the blackboards, and set the room in order. They made their own paste and sometimes spent an hour or two making jelly or preserves. They had a chicken yard and a garden. Various groups of the children were appointed week by week to feed and water the fowls and to weed and water the garden.

Later, after I came into more social contact with the Schraders in their home, I learned that Herr Schrader had inherited a large property, a part of which had deteriorated into what we would call in America, a slum district, and he and his wife were striving as best they could to educate the inhabitants of the district into better ideas of cleanliness and economy. As the children of the kindergarten all came from this district, she had unconsciously substituted reformatory activities for formative ones.²

Before leaving Germany, it was arranged that Herr and Frau Schrader should come to the Columbian Exposition. We were to engage a furnished apartment for them near us. Frau Schrader and I were to spend part of the time in translating some of Froebel's writings. Her death in 1892 prevented our realization of these plans.

At last, the time came for us to visit the Baroness von Marenholz-Bulow, who was still in Dresden, having aban-

²Later, I saw this same tendency in many charity and mission kindergartens in America. It was not until the deeper significance of the term *self-activity* had been translated into *creative-activity* that it was realized that this kind of house work could be made as arbitrary as the more formal mathematical work which I had seen in St. Louis. After our return to America I did much experimenting in my own kindergarten, the result of which was that, years later, I felt compelled to decline Miss Blow's interpretation of the kindergarten, as it included a uniform program for all kindergartens, regardless of the personal experiences of children from differing home environment and activities. In experimental work I found how much more readily the child responded to any form of activity in which he had either a personal experience or of which he had a clear mental imagery. My children played as heartily in the scenes portrayed by vividly told stories as they did in the reproducing of life about them, and thus the rich world of the imagination was enlarged as well as the useful world of sense-perception.

doned her usual summer in Norway. We had forwarded our letter of introduction, and had received from her in return a cordial letter welcoming us to Dresden. I was eager to meet the author of the *Reminiscences of Froebel*, as her interpretation had given me a more definite idea of how Froebel's insight into the heart of childhood could be practically applied than any other book I had read. Even his own book, the *Education of Man*, had not been as clear to me.

We arrived in Dresden one warm Saturday morning in mid-August and found our way to a pension recommended by a friend before we left America. By three o'clock in the afternoon we were unpacked and settled in our new quarters as comfortably as if we had planned to spend a year there. I was impatient to go at once to call on the Baroness, but our friendly hostess saved us from committing a social blunder by showing astonishment at our suggestion. She then told us that no one in Dresden ever made a formal call before five o'clock. We therefore filled in the intervening hours in Dresden's famous art gallery. At exactly five o'clock we were at the door of the Baroness's home. Our ring was answered by a staid, elderly maid-servant. We presented our cards. Looking somewhat puzzled but smiling pleasantly, she conducted us down the hall, opened a door, bowed us into a room, and left us, closing the door behind her. We seated ourselves on a small horse-hair sofa, and I instinctively began a survey of the room. The wall behind us was almost covered with an ivy vine made of paper cambric. Here and there were fastened on the vine, butterflies made of various colored yarns. The ivy was supposed to be potted in an earthen jar, which stood in one corner of the room, filled with earth. In the center of the room stood a glazed, artificial tree-stump three feet high. It had been so made that one half of it appeared to have been chopped several inches lower than the other half. On the lower part of the stump was fastened by means of a wire a real bird's nest, and on the upper half was a stuffed bird. I

can see that poor withered bird now as I write, and I feel something of the queer sensation that came into my throat at that time. In the opposite corner of the room was a hammock made of white cotton with white cotton-lace curtains looped back at the two ends of the hammock—I presume to represent an alcove. The curtains were tied with bows of pink cambric. The two windows of the room were similarly draped. There were seven black gutta-percha figurines here and there in the room.

This crude and silly affectation of art effect was quite shocking to me. I tried to look out of the window and not see the room, but the queer feeling had extended from my throat down to my heart, making me feel as if it were turning to lead. Mrs. Crouse began to speak, but I motioned her to silence. We waited for about twenty minutes. Again I tried to fix my attention on objects outside of the window, but again and again I found myself surveying the room, and I kept asking myself: "Is this the environment of the noble-souled woman I have crossed the ocean to meet? Can a woman who is contented to live in such sham surroundings be the interpreter of a great soul's message to mankind?"

At last the door opened and a young woman entered. Her manner was haughtily formal. She explained in excellent English that the Baroness was taking her afternoon nap and could not be disturbed. Then she inquired why we had not written, asking at what hour it would be convenient for the Baroness to see us. She added that, except by special appointment, the Baroness was not accustomed to receive calls from strangers. I saw that we had broken another formal custom, but I did not care, for I did not want to see the woman, were she baroness, duchess, or princess, who would be willing to live in such surroundings; all I wanted was to get away, to breathe once more the fresh air.

Mrs. Crouse presented the flowers that we had brought and politely apologized, stating that she thought our note had

mentioned the hour we would call. Then we bowed ourselves out. As soon as our carriage door closed, I felt the hot smarting tears come to my eyes. Mrs. Crouse, whom nothing ever disconcerted, began with: "I am sorry we made the mistake of not asking at what hour we should call." All I could say was: "Don't talk now. Have the man drive us home as quickly as he can." When we reached our rooms, I threw my hat on the table and flung myself on the bed and burst into tears—passionate tears of bitter disappointment and angry resentment. What right had a woman, who lived in such coarse pretense, to claim to be the intimate interpreter of the great, strong soul whose ideals were revolutionizing education! I was not accustomed to indulge in tears, and Mrs. Crouse had never seen me give way to my emotions in this way. All she could say was, "My dear, my dear, don't feel so badly about it. That room was awful, but the Baroness herself may be better. People with bad taste often have good hearts." I answered, "I can forgive bad taste, heedless disorder, or even lack of right cleanliness—but shams!" Mrs. Crouse was, as usual, calm and did what she could to comfort me, but I was angry and disappointed with the whole world.

I had been delivered from the despair and darkness that came from a disbelief in a God, and a doubt of any goodness in human nature, by my study of Froebel's view of true religion. His simple, yet profound explanation of the unity of God and his universe, and his almost instinctive insight into the evidence of the Divine, as well as the animal in human nature, had brought me into the acceptance of a religion, infinitely nobler than any that I had known in the past, and it filled my life with a rich significance. The fact that the Baroness von Marenholz-Bulow was his chief interpreter, to whom he had made the fullest explanation of the psychological basis of his work, seemed to sweep the whole of his theory into sham sentimentality. I felt myself falling back into the black-

ness of unbelief of any goodness or sincerity in the world. All that made life worth living seemed to have vanished. Mrs. Crouse used every argument she could to comfort me. Finally she spoke to me of the faith which our friend, Dr. William T. Harris, had in the kindergarten. She recalled many of the things that a number of the mothers had told of the help that their study with me in the kindergarten principles had been to them.

"They were all sentimentalizing, all dreaming of an impossibility, and I have been dreaming with the rest. It's all nothing, nothing! Of what use is a beautiful theory of life if it does not compel a sincerity of living! There was not one sincere note in that room!" I cried bitterly, and begged her to leave me to myself. I knew that I must fight my battle alone. She saw that any further argument merely increased my emotional excitement; she left the room, closing the door behind her. How long I lay upon the bed, how often I rose and walked the floor, how many times I vowed never again to allow myself to hold any illusions concerning life and its possibilities, I know not. Finally, from sheer exhaustion, I dropped to sleep. The next thing I knew, the sun was shining brightly and Mrs. Crouse was standing by my bed. Nature had come to the rescue.

The maid had brought our breakfast to our room. We ate as quietly as if nothing had happened. Mrs. Crouse wisely refrained from any allusion to my tempest of the night before. Just as we were finishing breakfast, the maid came again into the room bringing a note from Baroness von Marenholz-Bulow. She wrote that she regretted that she had missed seeing us, and suggested that we spend with her the hours from six to eight each afternoon during our stay in Dresden, beginning that afternoon. There were many things, she said, that she would like to discuss with us concerning the kindergarten work of the future. After reading her note aloud, I said, "I

cannot go. I do not want to meet her. She has so keenly disappointed my expectations that I could not meet her with any cordiality whatever. Let us go back to Berlin tonight." "But, my dear, your note stated that we hoped to be in Dresden two or three weeks," Mrs. Crouse exclaimed. "I know," I said, "but you can make some excuse. You can say that we are suddenly called back to Berlin. What can we get from a woman whose reception room is decorated with paper-cambric ivy and yarn butterflies!" However, Mrs. Crouse said that out of respect for Miss Blow who had given me a letter of introduction, we must at least call at the appointed hour, even if it was merely to say good-bye. I yielded to this. After settling the matter, we decided to spend the morning in a drive to one of Dresden's beautiful suburbs. I did not enjoy the drive. I had the vague feeling that someone whom I loved dearly had suddenly died, and my thought kept reiterating, "Life is but an empty dream, a foolish empty dream."

All this may seem absurd, but to me at the time it was tragically real. I had anticipated so eagerly this meeting with the great woman who, because she saw what the right understanding with little children would do for the world, had left court circles and had identified herself with teachers who did not have even the distinction of attending a college or a university. Her book *Reminiscences of Froebel* had seemed to show how intimate had been her contact with the intellectual life of Froebel. I had many questions that I had wanted to ask her. But how could such a woman as that room showed her to be aid me? I dreaded the call; I felt that it would be painfully embarrassing. I was not skilled in assumed cordiality. How would she meet us? Would it be with gushing sentimentality, or would it be with aristocratic hauteur? I had been told by some of her students in Berlin that she was very severe in her criticism when their work did not please her, and that the teachers and students in Dresden were afraid of her. "How

could anyone be afraid of the mistress of papier-mache tree stumps, wilted stuffed birds, and cotton-lace ornaments for a room?" I asked myself in scorn. I had lost all faith in any genuine sincerity in her, and for the time being, I lost faith in all ideals. I thought: "How true Dante was when he measured the degree of the sinfulness of a deed, not so much by the deed itself as by the number of souls whose faith in their fellow men it destroyed."

At the appointed hour we were once more at the Baroness's door. Mrs. Crouse again carried a bunch of roses in conformity with the custom. I declined carrying any or sharing with her in the nominal sum she had paid for the flowers.

We rang the bell and the door was again opened by the same maid. However, this time she turned to the right and opened a door into a long and stately library with polished floor, warm-toned rugs, old mahogany furniture, and book-lined walls, which indicated at once a home of refinement and culture. For a moment I stood confused and astonished at the unexpected charm of the room. It was only for a moment. Then I became aware of the presence of the world-renowned woman whom we had traveled more than five thousand miles to meet. She was lying, propped with pillows, on a chaise-longue at the farther side of a richly-carved library table, which fact accounts for my not seeing her the instant we entered the room. Her niece, who had been sitting on a low stool beside her, rose and came forward to greet us, apologizing for her aunt's not rising, and explained that she had a sprained ankle which had kept her in Dresden. Mrs. Crouse replied by apologizing for our informal call the day before. I paid little attention to the exchange of courtesies. I was looking at one of the most interesting faces I had ever seen. The Baroness's features were as clear-cut as a cameo, and her abundant hair was almost as white as the dress she wore. But the chief charm of her face was her unforgettable eyes. They gave no suggestion of failing strength, no evidence of advanced age. They

shone with the brightness of youth—no, that is not a good comparison; later conferences made me realize that there was depth of expression in them which no young eyes could possibly possess. They reminded me of the eyes in a portrait of the old Goethe which hangs in the Weimar Gallery. I saw at once that I could in no way connect this striking personality with the impression made by the crude room of the day before.³

After the presentation of Mrs. Crouse's flowers and the serving of some cake and wine by our hostess, we plunged at once into the earnest conference for which we had come. By the way, this same ceremony was re-enacted each day before the real conference of the afternoon began. The Baroness spoke English slowly, often inserting a French or German word which her niece immediately translated into English. Occasionally, when the English word did not come, she would make an impatient gesture with her small white hand, and her niece would supply the English word. This helped us considerably, but as a rule she used the plain, significant English that bespoke the cultured mind able to express profound thought in simple language.

I have often recalled how the Baroness insisted that the educational world must learn that the child grows far more through the development of his own efforts and experiences than through the adult's study of text-books, but that this necessitates wide culture in the director of his play and other activities. One day, after she had been speaking at length concerning the purpose of the *Mother Play* as illustrating merely some of the fundamental experiences needed by all children but which could be varied according to each child's needs and his surroundings, she then leaned back upon her

³The explanation of the paper-cambric-ivy-room is in no way related to my study with the Baroness. The maid had taken us into the room of a protégé of the dear lady, as she could not conceive of our calling on the Baroness without our having written and asked for an appointment.

cushion and said with a sigh,⁴ "I have taught Froebel's great educational ideal for forty years, I do not recall to how many students, but I have had only four who have really understood what I mean by 'unity.' Just the one thought of *unity*, was all that Froebel cared for. All the rest of his training was simply this way or that way of helping the child to feel connected with and interested in all about him: with Nature, with his fellow man, and with God. Why is it so hard to get people to understand this?"

Sometimes the Baroness would have her niece read to us, in excellent English, this or that lecture that she had given or some article that she had written in German or in French. This was done that we might more quickly cover the ground and be ready for questions and discussions. We had found this method an excellent help in our Berlin experience. Our time passed rapidly and our hours were richly filled, for I realized that she had comprehended the spiritual message of Froebel as had no one else I had met. I wondered sometimes why he himself was not less involved in his style when she was able to explain his ideas so clearly.

Some of our time was spent in reviewing Froebel's *Education of Man* and his *Mother Play*. The Baroness, like Miss Blow, considered the latter to have the deeper import of the two. She apparently took little interest in the manual part of the work, although she had the Dresden kindergarten supervisors give us a reception, at which there was an enormous and elaborate display of clumsy, materialistic, and utterly useless hand-work. The Baroness, of course, was unable to attend the

⁴I did not understand the meaning of her sigh until long years afterwards, when Frau Freckling had placed her entire *Frobelia*, with its hundreds of variations of forms, in my hands, and had explained to me that Froebel had given only fundamental directions, such as perpendicular, horizontal, and slanting to the right and to the left in his building and designing, simplifying even these terms to, up and down, right and left, back and front. His directions in weaving were simply, under and over, to the right and to the left; then combining these, from a center out or from a border in. For the student's own invention he allowed freedom. He had given but one illustration to show the flexibility of the moist slat-weaving and other materials used, saying after each lesson: "There now, go and see what you can create with this."

It is plain, from the above, to see that Froebel did not intend any arbitrary limitation as to the material used.

reception and seemed to care very little for the exhibit, passing it by with the remark that the lesser details of Froebel's work would in all probability be somewhat modified; that his essential contribution to education was his conviction that religion was not being presented aright to the little child; that it should never be a formal affair, but as incidental and natural as the child's relationship to his family. As my own growth advanced, always with the child in mind, I realized, as I did not at that time, that in all probability she had had very little experience with young children. When presenting the kindergarten cause to the crowned heads of Europe, she had taken Frau Schrader with her to manipulate the hand-work, while she explained the underlying principles of developing from small experiences into larger ones, from narrow relationships into broader ones. The break which later came in their friendship was due to the fact that the one over-emphasized practical results, changing many details, while the other ignored them almost entirely.

Inevitably, the last day of our visit came, and the end of the last hour had arrived. The Baroness insisted on her niece helping her to rise, and with the help of her crutch she accompanied us to the library door. We again expressed the great pleasure and profit our stay in Dresden had given us. She made no response to this. But taking my hand between her own two hands, she said, "You have come; I can go now." It was one of the supreme moments of my life. There was silence for half a minute, and then we slipped quietly out of the room.

After our return to Chicago, from that time on, the basis of my teaching has been to emphasize simplicity and sympathy in dealing with children, and also, to emphasize the need of broad culture on the part of the student.

CHAPTER XII

The International Kindergarten Union

AT the thirty-second annual convention of the National Educational Association, held at Saratoga Springs, July 15, 1892, Miss Sarah A. Stewart called a meeting of kindergarten training teachers, presidents of local kindergarten associations, and others interested in the kindergarten movement, to consider the advisability of forming an organization of national and international kindergarten interests.¹

At this meeting a committee of seven was elected by ballot to take the matter under consideration. The report of this committee was unanimously accepted at an afternoon session, at which time it was decided to form a temporary organization, the name of which should be The International Kindergarten Union. The aim of the Union was to be as follows: To gather and disseminate knowledge of the kindergarten movement throughout the world, to bring into active co-operation all kindergarten interests, to promote the establishment of kindergartens, and to elevate the standard of the professional training of the kindergartner. Mrs. Sarah B.

¹Mrs. James L. Hughes was president of the Kindergarten section of the National Education Association. Miss Annie Laws was charter member of this section.

Annie Laws, charter member and one of the founders of the International Kindergarten Union, served as its president for two terms, 1904 and 1905, and was one of Committee of Nineteen up to the time of her death, July 1, 1927. More than any other woman did her life express itself in the educational and humanitarian growth of Cincinnati. She organized the Kindergarten Training School of Cincinnati and was its president until the work was taken over by the University of Cincinnati. When the department was established in the university there were also incorporated a School of Nursing and a School of Household Administration which Miss Laws had included in her training school as essential branches. She was a member of the Cincinnati School Board, elected at a period when the number of women in executive positions of this character in our country could be counted on one hand. One of her achievements was the organization of the Federation of Mothers' Clubs in her city, which was widely influential in developing civic feeling in the field of child welfare.

Cooper² was elected president and Miss Sarah A. Stewart, vice-president. We little dreamed at that time how far-reaching would be the influence of such an organization.

The International Kindergarten Union issued its first circular letter during the year 1892, and stated in this letter that its immediate aim was to represent adequately the kindergarten progress throughout the country at the Columbian Exposition to be held in Chicago in 1893.

Through the years that elapsed between the first official meeting held in Chicago in July, 1893, and the entrance of our nation into the world war, in 1917, the programs of the International Kindergarten Union were filled with earnest discussions and followed by vital work. Not only were there annual meetings held in first one and then in another section of the country where the interest warranted, but there were also semi-annual meetings of the board and many meetings of various committees for the discussions of better music, selections of worth-while stories, uses of building blocks and other material, a better understanding of the true meaning of play, more indoor activities, and better outdoor sports.

Along with these discussions and consequent changes in methods and materials came a deeper comprehension of the fact that, if education was to be a process of the development of the child in self-expression and co-operation with other children, the kindergartner also needed to be in closer touch with the elementary grades. This will seem so self-evident to the young student teacher of today that she will hardly realize how vivid and vital were the discussions of those

²Sarah B. Cooper, née Ingersoll, was born in Cazenovia, New York, December 12, 1834. She was educated at Cazenovia Seminary, one of the earliest co-educational institutions in this country. Among her classmates were the late Senator Leland Stanford of California and the late Philip Armour of Chicago. She taught in the Troy Female Seminary, now Emma Willard Seminary, and was an active suffragist, working for the movement with Susan B. Anthony, Anna Shaw, Lady Somerset, and Frances Willard. She was a cousin of Robert Ingersoll. She espoused the, then, revolutionary cause of kindergarten education, and was instrumental in founding the Golden Gate Free Kindergarten Association of San Francisco, with the Silver Street Kindergarten made famous by Kate Douglas Smith (Kate Douglas Wiggin). Mrs. Cooper died December 11, 1896.

early years. We were pioneers, hewing our way through forests of established customs; climbing over mountain ranges of indifference or defiance on the part of principals and teachers of advanced grades. But we were led on always by the vision of the schools of the yet-to-be.

At our tenth annual meeting, held in Pittsburgh in 1903, a committee of three was appointed to select a committee of fifteen, including themselves, of the leading kindergartners of the country to define more clearly the theory and practice of the kindergarten. This original committee consisted of Miss Susan Blow, of St. Louis (chairman); Mrs. Alice H. Putnam, of Chicago; and Miss Lucy Wheelock, of Boston. This committee selected for the Committee of Fifteen, the following:

Mrs. Marie Kraus Boelte	New York
Miss Elizabeth Harrison	Chicago
Miss Caroline T. Haven	New York
Miss Patty Hill	Louisville
Miss Caroline M. C. Hart	Philadelphia
Miss Laura Fisher	Boston
Mrs. Mary B. Page	Chicago
Dr. Jenny B. Merrill	New York
Miss Harriet Niel	Washington
Miss Nora Archibald Smith	Boston
Miss Fanniebelle Curtis	New York
Miss Annie Laws	Cincinnati

Later it was decided to add the names of,

Mrs. James L. Hughes	Toronto
Miss Mary McCulloch	St. Louis
Miss Alice C. Fitts	Brooklyn
Miss Nina Vanderwalker	Milwaukee

Thus a committee of nineteen was formed.

Miss Blow called the first meeting of the Committee of Nineteen at Rochester in 1904. At this meeting Miss Blow resigned the chairmanship and Miss Wheelock was elected to fill the vacancy. At Buffalo in 1909 Miss Wheelock resigned

the chairmanship and Miss Laws was elected to fill the vacancy. Plans of the Committee of Nineteen formed the basis of many vital and valuable discussions.³

Later on we were much helped, and our views were broadened through the activities of organizations which emphasized special lines of education. Among them were the National Story Tellers' League, the National Playground Association, and the national child-welfare movements. Many of our members belonged to one or more of these organizations, and they always brought back to us much valuable help. One fine achievement of the International Kindergarten Union was the work it did in co-operation with the United States Bureau of Education at Washington in its effort to awaken our country to the real value and significance of the kindergarten as a basis of the new education which was awakening the interest of the leading educators of the country. Our first work as a Government committee in 1913, was to collect all available data concerning the kindergartens throughout the United States. Afterwards a number of valuable reports from various committees were printed by the Bureau of Education and distributed without charge.

The International Kindergarten Union continued its propaganda and throughout the years presented its fundamental principles before such large organizations as the National Education Association, the Federation of Women's Clubs, and the National Congress of Parent-Teacher Association, as well as before many local societies. It has steadily gone forward along lines of closer co-operation with the elementary grades in the schools of America. It has also advanced more definitely in the study of changed and changing methods in education, and the examination of the numerous test-

³In 1913 a book called *The Kindergarten* was published by the committee to present from three viewpoints the underlying theories which then controlled the practice of the kindergarten. The conservative report was written by Miss Blow; the radical position was stated by Miss Hill. My part in the work was to state the position of the liberal group who endeavored to find the reconciling viewpoint. In 1924 this committee published *Pioneers of the Kindergarten in America*.

ings of the mental ability of the child. These investigations were followed by illuminating discussions and a broader outlook on education for all of us.

Our correspondence with the kindergarten workers of other countries has aided in enlarging our field of activity. At the International Kindergarten Union meeting in Los Angeles in 1925, delegates from fifteen foreign countries submitted reports to the Delegates-Day program meeting. It was said at that meeting that never before in the history of the International Kindergarten Union had it come so near deserving its title.⁴ All this and much more resulted from the formation of the Union until it seemed that the day was not far distant when the home as well as the school would recognize that education in its truest sense cultivates the divine within the human, and that it walks hand in hand with religion which is neither a theory nor a dogma, but a guide for living; not merely a moral discipline, but a consciousness of an eternal presence.

Then came the crash of 1914, when all the past seemed swept away and the future a chaos. Gone was the dream of a union of all civilized nations through universal interest in childhood. As nation after nation joined in the strife, embittered by fierce hatred, to those of us who had been absorbed in the care and welfare of little children, it seemed as if the Christian religion itself was being weighed in the balance. Our own beloved land remained, as a nation, neutral, although every industry that could aid the dire destruction of war speeded up. Arms and ammunition, food and clothing were sent to allies and entente alike. At first only our diplomats believed that this terrible carnage would last longer than three months, six months—a year; but the merciless strife grew in magnitude. Another year—and our own beloved home land was preparing to enter the bloody arena. I give

⁴See official record of this meeting for a full report of our co-operation with foreign countries.

to you, a younger generation, this utterly inadequate conception of the general condition of American minds, trusting that it will help you to understand what the next forward move of the International Kindergarten Union accomplished.

The twenty-fourth annual convention of the International Kindergarten Union was held in Boston, in May, 1917. A banquet was given at one of the large hotels. Earlier in the convention, Miss Fanniebelle Curtis, supervisor of kindergartens of New York, who had just returned from her tour of inspection of the conditions of the children of France, had spoken earnestly to some of us concerning the misery and suffering that she had seen among the refugee children of Belgium and had promised to give a more detailed account of it to the entire convention. However, she had been called by telegram to Albany, to help push through the legislature a kindergarten bill which she much desired to have enacted, and did not return to the meeting till the hour of the banquet. In a conversation with me she said, "I regret deeply that I had to miss my opportunity to present the cause of the children of France and Belgium to the International Kindergarten Union. I feel sure that if they knew conditions over there, they would help in some way." I felt that the time and place for this great appeal was at hand, and with Miss Curtis' consent I passed a note up the line to the toastmistress, asking if Miss Curtis might be given a few minutes to speak in behalf of the refugee children of France. The note was read, and assent was given. It seems strange now, looking back upon the remarkable work which Miss Curtis afterwards accomplished, to say that she was quite nervous, and seemed to dread the ordeal of urging that our organization take up the work of rescuing as many as possible of the helpless little refugee children, who in the confusion and the terror of flight, had lost all connections with friends and relatives.

The festivities went forward, and I presume many bright, pleasant, and complimentary things were said. But neither

Miss Curtis nor I heard them. Finally just before the last toast, Miss Aborn, the chairman, announced that Miss Curtis had a message to give, which she felt sure we would all wish to hear. Miss Curtis rose, still holding the scrap of paper in her hand, by way of strengthening her courage I presume. She spoke slowly and quietly, but with earnestness of emotion in her voice which created an intense stillness in the large dining hall. She began, if I remember rightly, with these words, "I have seen hundreds of little children in France who have forgotten how to smile. Their homes have been burned, their parents either killed or lost in the throngs of thousands of terrified refugees. They are half starved, scantily clothed, bewildered, and terrified almost beyond the power of speech." I waited a moment for someone else to speak, but no one did. Then I rose and asked if a vote might be taken to ascertain if the International Kindergarten Union was willing to join Miss Curtis in her work in rescuing some of these children. The instant applause of the house showed how deeply she had stirred her audience. The vote was taken, and the Board was asked to arrange plans of work.

The printed report of this meeting of the International Kindergarten Union held in Boston, in 1917, gives in full the resolutions offered and accepted, and of the appointment of the Committee of Nineteen to take charge of the planning of our national war work. It also gives Miss Laws's admirable report of the subdivision of our work into an educational, a legislative, and a social-service committee, with Miss Curtis as chairman of the sub-committee of the legislative work, Miss Wheelock as chairman of the sub-committee of the educational work, and myself as chairman of the sub-committee of the social-service work. We were instructed to appeal to all branches of the International Kindergarten Union to help our plan of work, in every way they could.

Abridged reports from our chairman and sub-committees follow here:

MISS ANNIE LAWS'S REPORT
IN PART

To the Branches:

The International Kindergarten Union at its annual meeting in Boston, May 1917, pledged its membership to the task of the conservation and protection of the nation's children during the war, and agreed to stand ready to co-operate with the Government in every way in its power to accomplish this great end.

In view of this pledge, a circular letter was sent to every branch urging that steps be taken immediately to organize for some definite work, and the following lines were suggested by the Committee of Nineteen, to which was entrusted the formation of general plans or suggestions:

- (a) *Legislation.* To review existing legislation in the different localities with regard to provisions made for the protection of the child, the mother, and the home; to make these provisions known to others; to make every effort to conserve such legislation, when necessary, either by taking the initiative or by supplementing the efforts of other agencies.
- (b) *Education.* To make every effort to conserve all the educational forces in a community without diminution and to initiate others when desirable.
- (c) *Social Co-operation.* To make investigation of social agencies concerned with the child-saving and welfare movements, and to place special emphasis upon home visiting and phases of work for which the kindergarten is peculiarly fitted.

A letter written in September of the same year from Miss Curtis to Miss Laws, says in part:

As a member of the International Kindergarten Union War Committee, I want to do everything in my power that will be of service. The fact that I am serving on this committee gives me a feeling of courage and adds to my desire to be of service.

Again, in October, writing from France, Miss Curtis says:

Every heart on our committee would dare all for the world's children in this great hour of their need. . . . We

start this week to go among the colonies of the refugee children. I must not try to tell you now all that I am beginning to realize about the sufferings of these little ones.

I quote also an extract from Miss Wheelock's report—just enough to show its spirit:

Preparedness is the word of the hour. Our shops are preparing munitions; our factories are preparing means of shelter and protection for a vast army; our mills are preparing food for allies and ourselves. Every man and woman in the country is called to service to prepare a future world that shall be free from injustice, from aggressive domination. The teachers of the country, and especially the kindergartners, are called to render service as never before. A vast army of little children has entered the doors of our school buildings this year. What is done for them, what is said to them, what training is given to them, determine the character of our citizenship and the ideals by which we are to live.

I quote also from my circular letter, sent to all Branches of the International Kindergarten Union:

Our purpose is to co-operate with all existing agencies for the protection and conservation of child life, health, and happiness during the war in order that the pressing demands of military necessity may not so obscure the needs and rights of children as to cause our nation to make the irreparable blunder which the warring countries of Europe now acknowledge they have made. . . . As teachers of little children we know what this state of affairs means for the future of the nation. If the seed corn is trampled upon and destroyed, what must be the harvest?

Will you co-operate in the following ways?

1. Get in touch with all local organizations whose purpose it is to preserve and protect the health of children who are powerless to protect themselves:

- (a) The nearest Parent-Teacher Association.
- (b) The nearest maternity hospital.
- (c) The nearest children's hospital.
- (d) The nearest milk stations.
- (e) The nearest soup kitchens.
- (f) The free dispensaries.

- (g) The other places where care of health and conservation of food are taught.
- 2. Keep in touch with the means by which the social side of child life may be shielded through right activities from the darkness that the shadow of war would otherwise cast upon it:
 - (a) The day nurseries.
 - (b) The social settlements.
 - (c) The public playgrounds.
 - (d) The small park activities.
 - (e) The free story hours.
 - (f) The backyard gardens.
- 3. Interest yourself in new social movements:
 - (a) Free organ concerts once a week in all churches having good pipe organs and skilled organists at their command, arranging the concerts at such an hour that school children in the locality may attend.
 - (b) Free excursions for children through the art galleries and museums with guides to point out such objects as would interest boys and girls.
- 4. Introduce in your locality special hours each week when groups of little children may have the advantage of contact of good picturebooks and thus diminish the morbid craving for the kind of motion pictures which portray the weak and cruel side of life.
- 5. Organize story-telling leagues among the school children of the neighborhood, with yourself or some one else to rightly guide them; and organize excursions to the near-by woods or parks.

These and other activities help to keep the life of children sweet, wholesome, and full of right interests; they also help to awaken parents to the significance of their children's leisure hours, and they educate public opinion to the importance of safe-guarding the nation's most precious asset, the children.

You can be of great service to the I. K. U. by suggesting new social activities of wholesome kind, or by communicating with us as to the results you obtain from those which others have instituted. Every item of encouragement now helps the work.

Most of us must keep our posts of work—they are too important to be deserted. We cannot go to the front as trained nurses, or serve in official capacities as executive mem-

bers of the Red Cross, or contribute much money to the great cause. We can, however, show patriotism as deep and as much needed in giving of our time and interest to the all-important work of preparing America for a greater and nobler life by protecting her children from deteriorating influences which war inevitably brings.

Because of the lack of the response to this circular letter that I had hoped for, I concluded that I had not been definite enough as to how we could co-operate with these various lines of social service, as we were more or less experts in the various interests and activities of children. I therefore sent out a second letter, which read as follows:

My dear Miss —

In the name of the social-service-during-the-war-committee, I wish to thank the many busy chairmen of the various branches of the I. K. U. for their replies to our note of inquiry concerning the child welfare activities in their localities. Is it not now time for us to take the next step?

With this thought in mind we have had Kindergarten War Service cards printed, with a list of activities from which the kindergartners receiving the same may select the activity best suited to her own particular work. These activities, as you will see from the sample card, include, "Home Visiting, Mothers' Meetings, Day Nurseries, Excursions or Club work with children of any age, voluntary assistance in elementary grade work, and new or different lines of work."

Will you present this card, or one similar to it, to your branch at your next meeting, and ask those of your members who are willing, to sign them, in order that we may have an organized record of lines of work which were most successful in helping to keep strong and happy the lives of our future citizens?

The above letter was mailed not only to the presidents of the branches but to all the heads of all the kindergarten training schools of the country. With this card I sent a note stating that we would furnish for distribution, free of charge, any number of cards that might be needed. The result was most gratifying. Some three hundred letters passed between our

committee and the various branches, and more than one thousand cards were signed and returned to us.

The idea of a kindergarten unit in France came to Miss Curtis when, in 1917, she saw in Toul three hundred little children separated from their mothers—homesick, terror-stricken, and desolate. She stated that there were six hundred thousand refugees and repatriated children in France in 1917. She reported these conditions to the International Kindergarten Union. Financial response was immediate, and the Kindergarten Unit, Incorporated, was formed. The Unit gave substantial aid to thirty thousand children in thirty-seven towns and villages. In 1920, through conferences with the Minister of Public Instruction and other friends of childhood education, kindergartens were organized, and through the French government an official course for the training of kindergartners was established in Sevres, from which course twenty-two young women were graduated.

Of the "House of Memory" Miss Curtis says: "Our community house, with Vimy Ridge on the left, will face across the valley the heights of Notre Dame de Lorette; beyond are Flanders Fields. On the Heights of Lorette are one hundred thousand graves, marked with one hundred thousand white crosses. Sons of all the Allies lie there. There is no sea here; yet the French government is building a lighthouse on this height. As the light from this lighthouse shines across the valley, its message will be, 'Is it well with the Child?' And the lesser lights about Community House will flash back the message, 'In so far as it lies within our power to make it so—it is well with the Child.' "

Of course, I made a direct war appeal to my own alumnæ. I give here a copy of a letter I wrote to our college *News Bulletin* for their January issue, in 1918:

Dear daughters of the National Kindergarten and
Elementary College:

With this I send my thanks and appreciation of the many

loving messages that came to me at Christmas time, and with these go also New Year greetings to you all. Were it possible, I should send a personal letter to every one of you.

With the ending of 1917 let us close the door to its mistakes and regrets and open the door to new possibilities for service. We are living in mighty times. Hopes that have been cherished ever since the first Christmas announcement now seem nearer realization as nation after nation takes up the call of brotherhood and righteous peace; and all about are opportunities to serve, waiting for us to embrace them. Added responsibility for childhood's needs is demanding our first efforts. The Red Cross of mercy is calling for more and more compresses, bandages, surgical sponges, and the like. Hospitals are asking for more medicine, instruments, bed-clothing, and other appliances that lessen suffering and save precious lives. The trenches are needing knitted mufflers, sweaters, wristlets, and socks for their shivering soldiers. The Y. M. C. A. is pointing out its lack of magazines, short stories, cheery music, games, and other diversions for the thoughts of tired men back from the horrors of no-man's land. Lonely, homesick boys at our cantonments are pleading for friendly letters, newspaper clippings from home papers, funny paragraphs, and cartoons to cheer them up. Fully as strong comes the declaration that "Food fights the foe" and "every waste of food, fuel or fat is a gift to the enemy." Never before has it been so clearly seen that every kitchen may become a place of praise and prayer, and every table an altar of service and sacrifice. And now comes the new organization of the thrift loan, ready to help the least among us to realize that she, too, may be part of the great army of heroic souls working in life's trenches "while God is marching on." We are living in mighty times! Are we equal to them?

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

As the Christmas of 1917 approached, each of our students made a tarleton Christmas stocking and filled it with candy and nuts, and into each stocking was slipped a little note of encouragement or praise. Most of these stockings were accompanied by some personal gift, such as a handkerchief, a pencil, a pen, a card of safety pins, a box of stationery, or some similar inexpensive gift. These were all carefully sewed

into a compact package and were sent to one of our Illinois regiments who were at the front. A repetition of these and other activities were repeated the following year. We had a number of very fine addresses from various war workers. Through the efforts of one of our teachers, a Thrift Stamp Club was formed, and more than three thousand dollars worth of stamps were bought by the students. The students also bought a five hundred dollar Liberty Bond and presented it to the college as a beginning of a sinking fund.

I have gone into this somewhat detailed account, not only of our national body but also of our individual school, because of the thought that future members of the International Kindergarten Union might thereby be inspired to go forward in vital community work, almost as important, I sometimes think, as was the response made during war times. Injustice and cruelty still touch childhood, and these pioneer efforts inspired by kindergartners are the impulse for today's child-welfare movements.

We, as yet, only partially understand the great work that lies before us, involving as it does evolution, sociology, psychology, and the broader view of religion, all of which are part of the problems of childhood education. One does not wonder that Froebel stated that if within three hundred years after his death his ideal of education were understood, he would be satisfied. The work is complex and demands earnest study and faithful practical application of each added gain of insight with hearty co-operation with all others who are working for the same cause. We know that our International Kindergarten Union has made a brave beginning, but much lies ahead of us.

I cannot better close this appeal for continued inspiration in all training centers for teachers than by giving the abridged report of an address made before the National Kindergarten and Elementary College in July, 1923, by Miss Mary McDowell, head resident of the social settlement "back of the

'yards.' " Miss McDowell has recently been honored by appointment as the official head of the social service of the entire city of Chicago. I cannot describe Mary McDowell better than by using the title given her by her neighbors who live in the malodorous district back of the stockyards. They lovingly call her the "Madonna of the garbage can." Miss McDowell's message, here given in part, is, to me, a most satisfactory kindergarten statement.

The only thing I ever thoroughly studied was the kindergarten system. From the beginning I loved it very much. It has had a distinct influence on my attitude toward life, on my methods of doing things with grown people as well as with children; because it is a philosophy that goes beyond little children, and to be a kindergartner one must see the child not as a little child all alone but as a child that is a part of the great circle. . . . The little child must mean to you the whole of life, a child of nature, a child of humanity, and a child of God. Everyone who has been a success holds this in her heart. It becomes a matter of religion.

I never had anything that took a deeper hold of me than this philosophy of Froebel's as Elizabeth Harrison taught it.

We kindergartners must know the conditions under which the children live. We must know the father and the mother. We must know the economic condition of the home. We ought to have enough leisure to know the family life of every child we are dealing with, for only in knowing the child's home life can we really know the child. Then I think the kindergartner should know something about how to get better conditions for the children of the poor, know something of the conditions that those children will have to face when they go to work to help people change bad to good conditions in school and shop.

Every little child is worth-while in our democracy and every little child, no matter what the color of his skin, is a little citizen who can make our country what it ought to be; for the hope or despair of our democracy lies very much within the cities of the nation. This is a very great responsibility we have on our hands.

The Mayor made me commissioner of public welfare because we wanted a government that cared for human beings.

To be an efficient commissioner I had to have the courage to look at life steadily. I had to see that municipal government was not for political parties, but for the welfare of the homes, of the children, of the weak and the helpless. Its purpose was to bring cleanliness, purity, and beauty into the lives of all the people. Alas, we have not gotten these things yet. . . . My work back of the yards is far from finished. It can never be finished until politics stops playing with those things that make for the welfare of the people.

No neighborhood liveth to itself alone. The Stock Yards is a near neighbor to the Lake Shore Drive and the Packing Town to the University Community. The only way towards religion, culture, or science is to see relationships clearly, for in the end everything must come together in a perfect circle. Then "we see life steadily and see it whole."

CHAPTER XIII

First Convention of Mothers

IN the autumn of 1894, when Mrs. Crouse and I were coming home from a month's vacation in the East, I once again lamented the fact that we had been unable to establish a connection between our mothers' classes and the public schools of Chicago. Mrs. Crouse sat still for a few moments, slowly tapping her fingers on the window sill. I knew from this familiar gesture that she was thinking out some plan of work. In a few minutes she turned to me and said, "What would you think of our calling a convocation of the mothers of the nation? There is always a force in numbers, and public opinion would in time awaken a demand not only for more intelligent work in the homes but also for the co-operation with the schools which you think so desirable." "Could we do it?" I exclaimed. "Why not?" She quietly answered. "How would we best begin?" I again questioned. She replied, "You make out the list of what you think are the most important topics to be discussed. We can get the best experts obtainable on each topic and proceed as we did with the Literary Schools. I will see the general managers of the various railroads leading into Chicago and get them to offer reduced rates, let us say, for three days. It would not be wise to hold the meeting longer. We can go to the managing editors of the various newspapers and show them the value of the movement and emphasize the fact that it would add to the reputation of Chicago. We could suggest to one or two of the down-town hotel managers that they offer rates during the convention, and the thing would be done."

I held my breath for a moment; then recalling how this

educational association of mine had brought into co-operation every newspaper in Chicago when we were inaugurating our Literary Schools, I said hesitatingly, "Well, we can at least try it. It will be a great achievement if we can accomplish it."

So we took our notebooks and pencils and began planning a program in motherhood which would have two speakers at each morning and evening session, with afternoon discussions of topics brought forward at these sessions. I planned the conference to begin with a talk on pre-natal influences to be given by Dr. Bridges, President of Rush Medical College; then a paper to follow on the care of the mother during pregnancy, by another prominent physician. The topics selected for the evening, when we hoped the audience would be more general, were early child life, and the importance of quiet, and avoidance of excitement in infancy; then, of course, came the place and value of the kindergarten. I thought I might persuade one or two women to speak whose experiments along these lines had been conducted with more than usual intelligence. This would fill the second morning; then would follow a discussion of the best activities and materials for the wholesome advancement of early boyhood and girlhood, such as play, story-telling, songs, picturebooks, visits to neighboring stores and shops, and the growing need of children for comrades of their own age. On the third day, I planned talks on other sources of home education, such as excursions, visits to relatives, and so on.

Finally came our careful selection of speakers. Most of these, of course, were Chicago people, as at that time my intimate acquaintance did not extend far beyond my own city. Mrs. Crouse knew of one or two prominent clergymen in the East whom she thought we could persuade to come to so unique a gathering if the college would pay their traveling expenses. The convention itself was to be free to all comers, and the sessions were to be held in our college hall, thus saving

expense. This was, however, a wrong idea, as the end will show. We again went carefully over the list of speakers and added an alternative list, in case some of those could not come. We decided that the sooner this first convention for all mothers who were interested in the right training and care of their children was held, the better. Just two weeks from the day of our plan, the convention opened.

I wish to acknowledge here that much of our success in starting in a definite way a new field of education, without any financial backing, was due to Mrs. Crouse's ability to persuade the head managers of various organizations to grant her time and courteous attention. The uniqueness of our Literary Schools and the general newspaper reports of my lectures to mothers undoubtedly helped some, but the ease and rapidity with which this new enterprise was started was, I think, mainly due to the confidence Mrs. Crouse always inspired when dealing with the managers of large interests. She always insisted on seeing the head manager and usually succeeded in interesting him, whether it were in her church work, her missionary work, or her home charities.

On reaching Chicago, I found a letter telling me of my sister's illness. Having finished my part of the coming convention, I started the next morning for her home in Iowa. I returned to Chicago the evening before this convention of mothers was to open. Mrs. Crouse and I chatted for a while concerning arrangements as to the seating capacity of our assembly hall, securing ushers, and other details. I went to bed early, my head filled with renewed admiration for my friend's executive ability. Next morning at breakfast Mrs. Crouse was telling me of a conversation she had had with one of the newspaper managing editors. I interrupted with "Wasn't it fine that all the speakers responded so well. Did you have any difficulty in getting them?" A look of blank bewilderment came on her face; then speaking slowly, she said "My dear,

I have forgotten to invite any of the speakers." I suddenly felt as if I had turned to stone.

Failure, ridicule, disgrace stared me in the face. All I could say was, "Oh, Mrs. Crouse, what can we do?" Almost instantly she had regained her composure and replied, "Now, do not worry. It will come out all right. I am sorry I forgot about the speakers, but we can get them yet. I will go upstairs and telephone to Dr. Bridges, and I know we can get him to bring Dr. Jaggard along with him. That will start things all right. Get ready as soon as you can and come down in time to ask two or three of the fine mothers of your classes to help. They have plenty to give, and they can fill in the program until we get things adjusted." I gasped, "What about the newspapers? They have all printed today's program." Mrs. Crouse replied, "We can make it all right with them. It is the novelty of a mothers' convention that they are interested in, not the speakers. After we get things started, you can dictate two or three reports; or get some of the mothers to write down what they have to say, and the reporters will be glad to get 'copy' ready for their papers. I will go down to the college at once and get in communication with the other speakers, telling each of them that a mistake has been made. It will come out all right. Don't worry." With that, she left me.

For a few minutes I sat motionless, staring disaster in the face, repeating inarticulately, "Why did I not come back sooner? Why did I not realize that she had more than any one person could do?" I did not seem to have will power to rise from my chair. Then came the reaction. The cause was too great to fail. The opportunity of a lifetime lay before me. Never again might come such a chance to awaken public opinion. My courage returned, and I found myself repeating, "It must not fail. It simply must not fail. *The cause is too great.*"

By the time I reached the college the assembly hall was

filled with eager people, some of whom were being sent upstairs for an overflow meeting. Just how I managed to cover up my emotional stress, I do not now know. I stood at the head of the broad stairway that led to the assembly hall, smiled and shook hands with people and echoed, "Yes it is fine," and, "Isn't it encouraging to have such a response!" or, "It's going to be a great success!" All this time I had to keep a sharp watch for some of my "fine mothers" who, I felt, surely would come to my aid. As they came in, I took each of them aside, explained the emergency, and pleaded for her help. None of them—with one exception—had ever attempted to speak in public. They looked aghast at the mere suggestion that they should take charge of the overflow meeting, then come to the main meeting and help out, if need be. But the need was too great. I found it only necessary to tell them that unless they could come to the rescue, the whole convention would be a failure, and that the cause was too great to let lack of courage stand in the way. I asked them to tell the audience, as they had often told me, how they had been helped by their courses of study. And, like a band of loyal soldiers, they met the situation. One or two of them turned pale, but each one promised to do the best she could. Not one of them broke down. It was a hard test, but they did splendidly, and to this day I love them with a peculiar tenderness which one feels for a friend who has helped in a desperate emergency, even at great personal sacrifice.

I opened the overflow meeting and left it in the hands of capable mothers, while I hurried downstairs to be ready to speak when Dr. Bridges and Dr. Jaggard had ended their improvised speeches. To them, also, I shall always be grateful. At noon when I went home, every nerve in my body seemed to be crying out in protest. I took a warm bath, made myself eat some food, and then tried to sleep, but in vain. Mrs. Crouse telephoned me that the afternoon meeting had been provided for, and that a large down-town hall had

been engaged for the evening, adding that she felt sure that the speakers advertised would be on hand. But the next day and the next, who could tell what might happen!

Then I had a curious psychical experience. I suddenly remembered that this was the afternoon—the very hour—that the body of a beautiful eighteen-year-old daughter of a friend of mine was being buried. I arose from my bed and went to my desk to write a note to my bereaved friend. Somehow the thought of her sorrow and of the presence of the solemn mystery of death, hushed all temporary excitement. All annoyance and fear vanished. I seemed to have entered into a vast, silent chamber where nothing mattered save life to be worthily lived, sorrow to be bravely borne, and death to be courageously met. When I had finished my letter, all fatigue was gone. I can only account for this sudden change by the fact that the realization of a great sorrow sweeps aside temporary trouble. Possibly it was the sudden change of thought that allowed tired nerves to rest. I put on my wraps and went out to Jackson Park to sit for a time under my favorite willow trees and watch the waves of Lake Michigan come and go as they had come and gone for uncounted ages. I returned home quieted and ready for the evening session. Mrs. Crouse was there to meet me with the assurance that the afternoon round-table was a great success, the speakers for the evening had been secured, and a notice had been sent to all afternoon papers that the large assembly hall in the Methodist Church block had been engaged for the evening session.

When I reached the hall in the evening, it was filling, and our supervisor told me that at least two hundred working men and their wives had been seated in the hall for about an hour. One of them had remarked to her, "We made up our minds that we would get here before the rich people got all the good seats." This stirred me deeply, and I went forward to the ante-room rejoicing in, what seemed to me, my great opportunity of reaching people of all classes. However, I was met at

the door with the announcement that our first speaker, Dr. John Dewey, had a previous appointment which came later in the evening and could not be with us more than fifteen or twenty minutes. As he had not realized the size and importance of the audience, he naturally asked why he had not been informed before in detail of the enterprise. All I could say was that a mistake had been made and we were very sorry, but we needed his help. He was most kind and did his best to meet the emergency. The second speaker, a prominent woman, had sent a somewhat curt message, saying she was to give a dinner party that evening and could not be present.

It soon became necessary for us to bring in extra tables for the reporters, who sat nine in a row just in front of the platform. I was thus left as the only speaker, after Dr. Dewey, to fill an hour and a half before an audience of twelve hundred people and these nine newspaper reporters. When a desperate situation faces one, one either flunks or arouses sufficient courage to meet it. We sent to the college for a book in which the secretary had written one hundred more or less important questions which had been asked in our mothers' classes. By the time Dr. Dewey had filled his twenty minutes and had paid a generous compliment to the size of the audience, we had the book of questions in hand and were ready for the emergency. Mrs. Crouse announced in her serene and gracious way that she regretted to say that our second speaker was unable to be present, but she felt sure the audience would be interested in hearing about the discussions that our mothers' classes had been having. She then announced that she had in her hand a book containing one hundred questions which had been asked by the earnest and intelligent mothers of the mothers' classes, and that she would ask the questions and Miss Harrison would answer them. This grill work of changing from one topic to another took about three quarters of an hour. I made my answers as short and clear-cut as I could, keeping in mind those two hundred laborers and their wives rather than the

educated audience which sat behind them, but the applause which occasionally interrupted me came as heartily from one class as from the other, and I gained courage rapidly.

With the inspiration of such an audience, I soon forgot everything except the fact that apparently the hour had come in which Froebel was to be vindicated in his call to mothers to arouse themselves to the importance of their work, which call, alas, had long been unheeded. He, however, had written his book on motherhood; he had planted the seed and the harvest was beginning to appear.¹

After the questions and answers I began my subject of the evening, which was the great need for more definite knowledge concerning the racial instincts with which each child comes into the world; the need of knowing how to develop the higher impulses, a tremendous theme,—and of course, I could give but a limited outline of it. Even today, more than thirty years later, the doctors of our great medical schools and the professors of pedagogy in our universities are still struggling with this human problem. I did my best, however, and the audience seemed well pleased.

The following morning most of the Chicago papers reported the convention at length. They did their part in keeping up the interest throughout the three days it continued. One young reporter demanded my photograph, but I refused to give it, stating that it was the great cause for which we were

¹Women like the Baroness von Marenholz-Bulow, Frau Schrader, Mrs. Ellen Keys, Mrs. Carl Schurtz, Madame Kraus-Boelte, and Elizabeth Peabody* had received the message and carried it here and there, to different parts of Europe and across the sea to America, starting kindergartens and gathering small groups of educated men and women around them. The limit set for this book does not permit detailed account of the earlier work of men and women who had recognized the need of better understanding the greatness of Froebel's message. I am attempting to make clear some of the hindrances and the helps that I met with in my life work in behalf of childhood.

*Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, 1804-1894, was the daughter of Nathaniel and Sophia Palmer Peabody, New England settlers, and noted for patriotism from the period of the Revolution. One sister, Mary, became the wife of Horace Mann; another, Sophia, married Nathaniel Hawthorne. Elizabeth Peabody was associated with Bronson Alcott in his notable school in Boston, went to Germany to study the theory of the kindergarten from original sources, and on her return was instrumental in having the first kindergarten established in an American public school. She edited an educational paper devoted to kindergarten thought, and her published lectures are a record of early ardor for freedom and idealism in the early teaching of children that is ageless.

all working which mattered, not the increase of any one person's reputation. "I was sent over here to get your photograph, and I must have it," he replied. I shook my head, made no reply, and walked away. The next morning his paper had the picture of a portly woman, splendidly gowned in the height of fashion, with an elaborate corsage bouquet at her belt. Underneath the picture was my name. My friends considered it a good joke, as at that time I stood five feet five inches, weighed one hundred and eight pounds, and I was necessarily clothed in the simplest of garments. So we had some fun in the midst of the strain and anxieties of the new enterprise. The convention ended as enthusiastically as it had begun. It was decided that we would call another convention for the next year.

So far as my knowledge goes, this was the first assembly of twelve hundred people for a mothers' convention. Some had come from as far east as New York, Washington, and Philadelphia. Some from as far north and west as Minneapolis, Omaha, and Denver.

When the second Mother's Convention was called, I was in bed with a severe attack of pneumonia and was unable to take part in the meetings, although I had helped to plan the assembly and had seen to it that all speakers had been duly invited. After the convention adjourned, Mrs. Crouse came over to tell me of its success. She reported that after she and Mrs. Theodore W. Birney had an enthusiastic talk about the future of the work, Mrs. Birney felt that the work should be placed on a permanent basis by an endowment. All the Chicago papers again gave fine reports of this second convention.

When the third Convention of Mothers met in October 1896, I was living in a shack on one of the foothills of southern California, struggling to regain my health. I re-

ceived a telegram bearing greetings from the mothers assembled, stating that all had gone well.

In February, 1897, a convention was held in Washington, D. C. It was largely through Mrs. Birney's influence that Mrs. Phoebe Hearst financed the enterprise and became sponsor of the organization which at the time took the name of the National Congress of Mothers. Mrs. Hearst did many fine and beneficial things with her money, as well as with her sympathy, but I know of none more far-reaching than this financing of the National Congress of Mothers, out of which has grown the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. It is fast becoming international, and the scientific as well as the spiritual greatness of parenthood is beginning to be understood. Mrs. Birney worked hard to bring about this Washington convention and deservedly was elected the first president of the organization.

I now saw before me the dream of awakened motherhood more than fulfilled, and I knew that I had done my part, small as it was, in helping to make it a reality, and my heart thrilled with thanksgiving and with the new vision of what was yet to be. I have reported here, only our small part in the beginning days of a great and mighty movement which is now sweeping over the civilized world. To it, biology, psychology, hygiene, pedagogy, ethics, music, art, and religion are contributing their best; even the World War, as terrible as it was, has helped to awaken us to how imperfect the past has been in the preparation for parenthood.

The time is coming when the right understanding of child life will be recognized as the supreme task of civilization.

CHAPTER XIV

In the Foothills of California

I LAY listlessly watching a brilliant sunset intensify the sharp outline of Mt. Lowe. The evening shadows slowly descended, as the sunset retreated to the lower ranges, clustered around the majestic peak and then drifted to the foothills. Soon even the afterglow had faded away and twilight covered the landscape. My dearly beloved life-time friend, Mrs. Hosford, had drawn my cot close to the window, which gave a fine view of the Sierra Madre Mountains, and then, at my request, had gone for a walk. I wanted to be alone.

I gazed out of the window, although the deepening twilight had blurred the outlines of the mountains—but what had sunsets or twilights to do with me? They mattered very little. Nothing mattered much—if only this pain would stop, but of course it wouldn't. I turned my head wearily toward the blank wall of the opposite side of the room. A large bouquet of La France roses had been placed on a stand near my cot. Some stranger had sent them. I knew nothing about her—did not even know her name. She knew nothing about me. I was to her merely a "sick lady" who had recently come into the neighborhood. Well, no matter—nothing mattered much—if only this incessant pain would stop. The monotony of it was indeed wearing.

Again I restlessly turned my head toward the window and languidly noticed that a light had appeared on the summit of Mt. Lowe. Probably some tourists were having a bonfire. Why should I notice their bonfire? It mattered nothing to me. If only this pain would stop; it was like a wall shutting me in; all other sensations were dulled and jaded. I was in the weakening mood of self-pity. Was this incessant pain never

to stop? Could I go on living in such helplessness? Did I want to go on living? The light was brighter on Mt. Lowe. I closed my eyes, but that did not lessen the pain. After a few minutes I opened them again. Evidently the light on Mt. Lowe was not a bonfire. It must be a fire balloon. It had risen a foot or more from the summit of the mountain. I idly wondered if it was a game of fire signals that was going on. Well, no matter. Listlessly I continued to watch the ascent of the fire balloon. How steadily it moved upward. Evidently there was no wind on the mountain top tonight. Still, its slow ascent fascinated me.

As this light rose higher and higher a startling fact dawned upon me. I was really watching our world revolve upon its axis, registered by the light of a brilliant star millions of miles distant, and, so far as I knew, trillions of years old. Let me think a little; was I forgetting the astronomy I had learned, the majesty of which had once filled me with a thrill of reverent awe as I attempted to conceive the unthinkable space and incalculable time that even glimpses of this great science gave? "Just what is the circumference of our earth?" I asked myself. I had to think hard. "About twenty-five thousand square miles. Is it not? I will travel this distance in the next twenty-four hours. That means that I am going at the rate of more than a thousand miles an hour, and far off in incomprehensible space this mighty star is measuring the swiftness of my journey with unerring exactness! Why have I not thought of this before? Why do I not tumble off? What makes gravity keep me from falling into the vast void called space? Perhaps I am dropping off just now." It was getting dark, I could no longer see Mt. Lowe.

I opened my eyes. My faithful friend was sitting beside my cot. "What a fine sleep you have had, nearly two hours!" she exclaimed. "Now I feel sure you are going to get well. You will soon be able to take a drive." Her voice was so cheery that I asked her to arrange my pillows, so that I could sit up

for a little while. She did it so gently and lovingly and seemed so happy over my effort to sit erect that the thought came, "Yes, I must get well, if for no other reason than not to disappoint her."

Our work in Chicago had grown beyond our fondest expectations and I was in the midst of almost a hurricane of activities. The college had increased in numbers, which necessitated that new teachers be added to our faculty, and they needed to be trained into our way of doing things. Perplexing changes in curriculum were also necessary; a three-year standard had been established for mothers' classes as well as for kindergartners. I had been allowed to experiment in the primary grade of the school in which I was teaching, and the results had not been entirely satisfactory. I then began experimenting through two or three teachers in other primary grades. I had to deal gently with them, as they did not fully understand the aim of the new work.

On returning late in September 1895 from a short series of lectures in neighboring cities, I had found that Mrs. Crouse had arranged for me to attend a convention in Portland, Oregon, including single lectures in eight towns enroute. We were both delighted at the evidence of the spread of interest in the new education. These, with a number of other problems which usually attended the rapid growth of a new idea, made it hard for me to leave the college for even so important an event as the Oregon convention. I felt that I should make a rapid survey of our field work before starting on a chain of lectures half-way across the continent.

One young girl, with only two years of preparation, had opened a kindergarten in her own church to obtain money for further training. The undertaking had not been successful, and she was thoroughly disheartened and begged me to come to the kindergarten and talk to the mothers of her church. She pleaded that her pastor was much in sympathy with kindergarten methods and that there were a number of wealthy

women in the church who would support the kindergarten if their interests could be aroused. I hesitated, for I knew that my time was crowded until I should leave for the Oregon convention. In the end, however, I yielded and promised to come to her aid the following Tuesday.

The church was overheated, and as soon as the lecture was over I had hurried back to my north-side home. It was not more than a half-hour's journey, but I was chilled through. I took a warm bath and went to bed immediately after reaching home, but my precaution was too late. The next morning, Mrs. Beebe, our supervisor, whose room was next to mine, found me suffering intensely and at once telephoned for a physician. The doctor pronounced my case a severe attack of pneumonia and ordered a trained nurse, privately telling Mrs. Beebe that it would be a fight between life and death. My sister was telegraphed to come. For some ten days I knew nothing but the struggle to endure the pain. After a month, the doctor announced that I was well enough to go by slow stages to California. Being young and still filled with a great ideal, I went.

It was while I had been so ill that the second convention of mothers came and went. The city newspapers again gave cordial help by reporting each session, and the audience showed increased interest by taking a lively part in the discussions which followed the addresses. All this I learned later. For the time being I saw no one but my sister, Mrs. Beebe, the nurse, and the doctor. When the doctor decided that it was safe for me to travel, my sister, the nurse and I had started for my sister's home in Iowa, where I rested for three weeks. During this period of rest, Mrs. Esther Hosford, the widow of our family doctor and for years a close friend to my mother, had volunteered to accompany me to California as soon as it was advisable for me to make the change. As soon as we reached Pasadena, Mrs. Hosford found a pleasant home for us, where we were given two upper bedrooms overlooking

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and dates, which appears to be a record of some kind. The names are written in a cursive script, and the dates are in a more formal, printed style. The list is organized into two columns, with names on the left and dates on the right.

2. The second part of the document is a series of short, handwritten notes or entries. These are written in a cursive script and are arranged in a single column. The notes appear to be related to the names and dates in the first part, possibly providing additional information or commentary.

3. The third part of the document is a series of short, handwritten notes or entries. These are written in a cursive script and are arranged in a single column. The notes appear to be related to the names and dates in the first part, possibly providing additional information or commentary.

4. The fourth part of the document is a series of short, handwritten notes or entries. These are written in a cursive script and are arranged in a single column. The notes appear to be related to the names and dates in the first part, possibly providing additional information or commentary.

5. The fifth part of the document is a series of short, handwritten notes or entries. These are written in a cursive script and are arranged in a single column. The notes appear to be related to the names and dates in the first part, possibly providing additional information or commentary.

The 1st of September 1891
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the above matter. I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation. I am sure, however, that the facts are as stated in the report. I am sure that you will find the report to be a fair and accurate statement of the facts. I am sure that you will find the report to be a fair and accurate statement of the facts. I am sure that you will find the report to be a fair and accurate statement of the facts.

The first of these is the fact that the
 system is not a simple one, but a
 complex one, involving many factors
 which are not yet fully understood.
 The second is that the system is not
 a static one, but a dynamic one,
 which is constantly changing and
 evolving. The third is that the
 system is not a uniform one, but a
 heterogeneous one, with many
 different parts and components.
 The fourth is that the system is not
 a closed one, but an open one,
 which is constantly interacting with
 the environment. The fifth is that
 the system is not a simple one, but a
 complex one, involving many factors
 which are not yet fully understood.

course, the loitering tourists on the sidewalks cheered the three-headed race as we passed them.

Our hostess could in no way explain this unaccountable conduct of her staid old horse, until we learned from her former owner, that "Old Nell," in her youth, had been a circus horse. The swift rhythmic gallop evidently brought a sudden recollection of her youthful days.

Early in April, Mrs. Hosford received a letter from her son-in-law asking her to return home and take charge of his two sons and the home, as he and his second wife were planning a trip of several months in the East. We were both disappointed, as she had planned to stay much longer in California. By this time I was able to get about without the support of her arm, and my doctor had advised that with the coming of the spring I should find some place among the foot-hills, above the fog-line, to avoid a return of my bronchitis. He suggested camping as an excellent thing for me. I was as yet not strong enough to attempt camping alone. In fact, I was not able to stand more than ten or fifteen minutes at a time, and I knew of no one whom I could persuade to go with me and take charge of my domestic affairs. Just at this crisis I had an unexpected call from one of our former students, Miss Mattie McMinn. I knew she had gone to California the year before for her health, but I had no idea where she was. I was delighted to see her, as she was a charming girl, and, as I happened to know, an excellent home-maker. I found that after coming to California she had tried teaching but had been compelled to give it up, and although she was a fine, courageous girl, she was in a most disheartened frame of mind. Our coming together was truly fortunate for both of us. She was in need of a home and I was in need of a friendly companion in my foot-hills adventure. I at once made her the proposal that we find a suitable place among the foothills and I would pay all the expenses if she would take charge of the home. She joyfully consented, and we started out. Before Mrs. Hosford

left, she had the satisfaction of knowing that Miss McMinn and I had found an old cabin, built years before by some frontiersman. The house was of course weather-boarded and had neither plaster nor paper. But it had a kitchen, two narrow bed-rooms and a living-room; the last named had the added attraction of a small fire-place. The pioneer owner had planted orange, lemon, apricot, almond, and fig trees, and they were still in good bearing condition. Water had been piped to the back door from a mountain spring.

Just back of the place was a large vineyard, and about half a mile up the canon lived a man who agreed to furnish us with milk, eggs, butter and an occasional fowl. We learned also that a Chinaman made the rounds of these foothills once a week with a wagon of fresh vegetables, and that twice a week a North Pasadena butcher came for orders. One need not have an abundance of money to enjoy the health-giving climate of Southern California. We paid only five dollars a month for the cabin, with its surrounding grounds, and our food rarely cost us more than eight dollars a week. Part of the time while I was living thus near to Nature's heart I had friends who were paying one hundred dollars a week for each member of the family at a Pasadena hotel.

In my *Two Children of the Foot Hills* I have told of the interesting experiences we had with two mountain children, who were our nearest neighbors, living about a quarter of a mile away. But I have told almost nothing in that book about the beauty of our environment, nor of some of our experiences of unusual phenomena in which nature speaks her "various language" with decided emphasis. I have written a most inadequate account of my foot-hill experiences in this little book. The two years spent in the hills were wonderful years, and I place them among the most profitable of my life.

There were six distinct ranges of mountains. And each range—at times, each mountain of these ranges—had its own way of announcing the time of day, or any change in the

weather. There was one range the children loved to call "the purple mountains," because of the rich velvet color it usually took on at sunset. We never tired of watching the changing forms of the clouds, and the lights and shadows which played over the different ranges. The little girl called them "God's big shadow birds." The children had learned to enjoy keenly the little game of trying to catch the reflected sunlight from a hand-mirror which Froebel called the "Light Bird Game." I would give much to have the power to paint some of those sunrises and sunsets. I usually had the sunrise to myself, as my part of getting breakfast, as soon as I was able, was to walk the half mile up the cañon for our milk and cream and fresh eggs.

I tell in my little book *Some Silent Teachers* of a California sunset experience, which I cannot refrain from repeating in this connection. (See Page 246.)

While living among the foot-hills of Southern California, I frequently had to ask the favor of a ride to town in some one of my neighbors' vehicles. One morning, I found myself seated in a hay cart beside an undeveloped country youth of nineteen who did the chores on a neighboring ranch. Having lived all his life among the Sierra Madre Mountains, he was an expert driver on mountain roads. Our conversation dragged a little and by way of renewing it, I said, "It was a beautiful sunset we had last night, wasn't it?" "I dun' know," was his laconic answer. "Did you not notice it?" I asked. "The sky was all crimson with masses of purple and gold and white clouds floating over it. The coloring was so vivid that for a time the foot-hills took on the same color." "Is that so?" replied he, looking up with an expression of real interest. "I don't know as I ever saw a sunset. I al'ays fodder the stock about that time." "Do you really mean," said I, "that you never stop to look at the marvelous sunsets we have in these mountains?" "No," he answered laughing a little at my enthusiasm, "I don't know as I ever did; leastwise I can't recollect ever seeing one." "Won't you promise," said I, "that to-morrow night you will look at the western sky at about seven o'clock." He consented and we jogged on into town, I revolv-

ing in my mind how it was possible for human consciousness to be so dormant as not to receive sensations made by the resplendent coloring that each sunrise and sunset spread abroad over the clear California sky in this mountain district. The next evening, it so chanced that my companion and I were returning from our daily tramp just as again the gorgeous panorama of beauty was once more trailing across the western horizon. By way of shortening our trip we crossed the ranch where the youth lived. As we came in sight of the barn-yard a picture, which I shall never forget, appeared before us. The lad had evidently been out hunting, and on entering the yard had recalled the promise made to me the day before and had looked up to the sunset sky. There he stood transfixed, resting on his gun, a dead rabbit hanging forgotten in his other hand, his lower jaw dropped in astonishment and his wide-open eyes staring at an amazing vision of green and pink and bronze and gold. The expression on his face was indescribable. It was evidently his first sunset, and yet for nineteen years he had lived, where each morning and evening had been performed a miracle of beauty with a radiance and glory found in but few other spots on earth.

I shall never forget the first morning that I saw a glistening white wall of fog on both sides of us, surging and rushing up each of the two cañons that separated us from the adjoining hills. The fog wall was several feet higher than the sides of our foot-hill, yet it left us in clear sunlight. I was almost breathless, and hurried back toward our cabin to call Miss McMinn to come out and see the miracle. I thought we were going to be swallowed up in a fog storm, but soon I realized that the wind must have driven a dense fog up the narrow cañon and that suction had raised it higher. I turned to Miss McMinn and said, "Perhaps this explains the wall of water in the Red Sea in the time of Moses." We later had one or two more exhibitions of the power of the wind over the fog clouds, but no other one so spectacular as the first one I saw. We also had a demonstration of the wind's mastery over the sand of the desert. One day a soft brown dust as fine as flour came blowing through the gaps of the mountains east of us and soon

darkened the morning air into twilight. We were obliged to close doors and windows for several hours, and we had to clean house vigorously when the storm was over. This experience gave us some faint idea of a desert storm.

Then there was the forest fire that raged for three days and three nights on one of the upper ranges—too far away for us to feel the heat but near enough to throw a glare of red light over our foot-hill, illumine our cabin, and occasionally play the trick of causing the wind to drop a red-hot ember near us.

How can I describe the thrills we had the second morning after a pouring rainstorm, which had lasted a day and a night and another day, when we found our tiny cañon brooks had swollen into mountain torrents, which shut us away from all human connection for twenty-four hours. One of these many memory pictures is of our going to bed one night with our neighboring foot-hill resting quietly in its tawny brown, and after a gentle shower which lasted most of the night our waking in the morning to find this same foot-hill covered with a soft velvety green; and a day or two of fine weather covered the mesa below with a rich embroidery of thousands upon thousands of wild flowers. But over and above all other memories of this close contact with the wonders of Nature was the apparent nearness of the stars. They seemed to hang almost within reach of us, and shone with a strange brilliancy that filled one with silent awe. So near was the great Universe, yet so incomprehensible in magnitude that one whispered to oneself, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

As our June college commencement approached I was seized with a desire to send a message to our Chicago graduating class. I decided on my message and had it transcribed on cards, but I wished to have them decorated with scarlet carnations, our college flower. I found no artist in Los Angeles willing to take the time to attend to such a small order. Finally a good-natured bric-a-brac merchant told me that there was a young

fellow in the Russett Building who might be glad to do my job. He said, "He has a studio or something of that sort in the back end of the top floor. His name is Traver, if I remember rightly." I thanked him and started out to hunt for the young artist. I found the studio, and in response to my knock the door was opened by a pale-faced young fellow. I stated what I wanted done, and asked him if he thought he could do it, and what would be the charges. He said, "Let me make a sketch to see if I understand just what you want." While he was making the sketch, I walked around the room, examining the pencil outlines, pen and ink drawings, and water-color sketches that were pinned on the wall. When he had finished the design, I found it entirely satisfactory and gave him the order to decorate the cards. Then on the impulse of the moment I said, "Who made these sketches on the wall?" He replied modestly, "They are mine." I at once saw the situation. Here was a struggling, half-sick boy who had the gift of creating beauty of line and color. I had risen to leave, but I sat down again and said, "Pardon me if I seem inquisitive. May I ask what kind of work you are doing at the present time?" "I am doing odd jobs in illustrating advertisements for the Santa Fe Railroad, when I can get the chance." His tone was one of sadness. "These sketches on the wall indicate that you are capable of doing more worth-while work than that," I said. An expression of almost despair came over his face, and it was intensified by the tone of his voice when he said, "I know I have ability, but I lack the necessary training. I finished the high-school course back in Michigan, and then my health broke down, and I came out here eight months ago, hoping to get both work and health. But I have no credentials, no backing of any kind, and I have been glad to get even this work. It is simple work, and of course brings but little pay. If I could make a little headway, I know I could succeed." "Have you sought advice or help?" I asked. "No, to whom could I go? I know no one." I replied, "There are a

score of rich men right here in Los Angeles who would be willing to help a young fellow like you. These drawings are a sufficient guarantee of your ability."

The look of sadness still remained on his face, and he said, speaking slowly, "Perhaps, but how am I to find them?" I answered, "I will dictate a letter, which I think will bring the right man." He looked rather dubious as he picked up a pencil and drew a sheet of paper to him. I dictated a short business letter to be written in the first person, stating that he was a young Ann Arbor student, who had come to California to gain his health. Having become somewhat stronger, he deeply desired to continue his art education, as he had been assured by his teachers that he had more than average ability in draughtsmanship. The letter ended by his inviting his prospective benefactor to come to his studio and examine his work. If it was thought worth-while, he wished to ask for the loan of a sum with which to fit himself for the work that he could do best. He could give references from his home town in Michigan.

Having finished the dictation of this letter I said, "Now have six typewritten copies—not carbon copies—of this letter addressed to six of the rich business men in Los Angeles." He smiled faintly and said, "Do you really think this will interest any of them?" "I have seen a good deal more of the world than you have," I answered. "I feel quite sure that it will. There is much more kindness in the world than we realize. All you are asking of each of these men is to come and see for himself whether he thinks you are or are not worth some of the money he is willing to invest in humanity. No harm is done if none of these come; just send six more letters to as many other men. Faith in yourself and faith in your fellow man is what you need. You can mail my cards to me when you have finished them," I said to him as I rose to leave, at the same time handing him the money asked for the work. I then left him and returned to my mountain shack, wondering

whether I had helped him. The cards came two days later. I acknowledged them with a little note of encouragement, and asked him if he had sent out the letters as he had planned to do.

About five days after I received the cards, as I lay one afternoon in my hammock, I heard the rhythmic sound of the hoofs of a galloping horse. In a minute more, horse and horseman appeared in sight. It was the young artist, but his face was luminous with good news, and with one hand he was happily waving his cap. I knew what had happened, and calling Margaret to share with me the joy he was bringing, I went forward to meet him. Even before he had dismounted he exclaimed, "The third letter brought the right man this morning, and I have such fine news to tell you that I could not wait to write you. I borrowed this horse and came up here as quickly as I could." The fine news was that the man had not only recognized the young artist's talent, but he wanted the boy to go to Europe and get the best training that Europe had to give. He was entirely willing to lend the money—and did not require interest on it—till the necessary training had been gained. But he wanted his young protégé to submit specimens of his work to some well-known artist for examination, and advise the best art center for him to attend. The boy laughed in sheer glee as he added: "The old gentleman said, 'I don't want any money wasted, and I don't want you to starve yourself while working, so have some fellow who has made good select the school you need and estimate about what it will cost for the best technical training and how long it will take for you to get through.'"

It was a keen delight to see the boyish face. All fatigue had vanished, in fact, he no longer looked frail and weak. He was alive in every atom of his being. With all my heart, I wished "the old gentleman" could have been invisibly present while Margaret and I listened to the details of the interview. The boy would stop telling his happy news, every now and then,

and exclaim, "It is like a dream; it seems too good to be true." For an hour or more we laughed and joked with him, and planned all sorts of imaginary experiences which might be his in Europe. When he came to consider an artist to advise him in the matter of a best art school for his purposes, and also to criticize his work already done, he said, "I haven't a soul I can ask except my art teacher at Ann Arbor. Although she is a jolly good drawing teacher, she doesn't know anything about European art schools. I don't think she has ever been out of the state of Michigan." Then I told him of Halsey Ives, and the generous way in which he had helped me when I was in need of the kind of guidance that money could not buy. So we decided that young Traver should send me some of his best work, and that I should write Mr. Ives explaining his need of help and, at the same time, send him the sketches; then we would await results.

At an early date we received two letters from Mr. Ives, one to me expressing his cordial interest in the young artist, the other to Mr. Warde Traver. In the latter letter were a few inquiries as to past experiences. If I recollect aright, several letters passed between Mr. Ives and my new friend. One very nice letter went from Mr. Ives to Traver's benefactor, whose name I have forgotten, but it does not matter, for he had his reward. In less than a month the boy was on his way to Munich, where he was to continue his art education. I had a letter from him announcing his arrival, in which he stated that he had been admitted into the second year's classes; a few months later came a letter saying he had been promoted to some of the third year's work. In two and one-half years he had finished his work in the Munich school, and had been granted three months of travel to inspect the great art galleries of Europe.

He was thoughtful enough to write me on his arrival in New York, of the order awaiting him—I think it was from the Century Company—for five-hundred dollars' worth of

work, and of another check from his benefactor, as an expression of satisfaction he had received from a portrait head which the young artist had sent him. The subject represented the moment in the life of Jesus when he said "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden." The portrait had been sent as a gift, but the sender was highly delighted that his benefactor had considered it worth five hundred dollars. From that time on his career was assured.

Warde Traver has added much beauty to the world and has been the means of helping others.

CHAPTER XV

Outlook Into the Future

I SHALL never forget the thirty-first day of May, 1907, when I stood for the last time upon the platform at 10 East Van Buren Street. I had gained more strength and courage and determination to hold steadfastly to the higher ideals of life by speaking there, upon that platform, than anywhere else on earth. There is nothing in all this world which makes us half so strong as the knowledge that others need our strength. The needs of growing young lives were always a spur to me.

It was with anxious hearts and much hesitancy that Mrs. Crouse and I had signed the first three-years' lease to the second story of this building fourteen years before. We had managed up to that time to dovetail our work into two rooms at the Art Institute. Slowly and steadily the growing needs of the school made it necessary for us to push into the two front rooms upstairs. The four back rooms we rented to artists for studios to try to help pay what seemed to us then an enormous rent. But the school soon outgrew even these new quarters, and we were compelled to use the back rooms also, and then we gave up altogether the outgrown building and moved into new and larger quarters. However, it is not of the growth of the school of which I wish to speak, but rather of its activities.

It was there that Mrs. Crouse and I counseled together and decided that each girl permitted to take the kindergarten training with us should have at least a high school education before she could be accepted. This was, at that time, an unknown requirement in any other kindergarten training school. Now all reputable and recognized kindergarten training

schools make that demand. It was from those rooms that Mrs. Crouse and I went to meet Mrs. Putnam and Mrs. Blatchford at the Board of Education to plead for the adoption of the kindergarten by the public schools of the city.— They are today so much a part of our public-school system that nothing can dislodge them. In 1926 about six hundred thousand children were enrolled in the city public-school kindergartens—. There at the suggestion of Mrs. Treat, Miss Barber and one or two of our more experienced directors, the first program of round-tables were organized and compared, and daily programs in kindergartens were made to show definite organization and adjustment to the conditions and environments of the various schools. In the early days programs were dictated by a supervisor or training teacher and literally carried out in uniform details. Where this was not the case the kindergartner usually followed the lead of her children each day without any connection of one day with another or any seeming estimate of values of activities.

It was within those walls that the first mothers' class in kindergarten study ever held in this country graduated after a three years' course. Since that time mothers' classes and mothers' clubs have grown up all over the nation until their name is legion. I may not stop now to speak of the many philanthropic and educational movements for the betterment of child life which have resulted from those, at first, much misunderstood and derided "mothers' classes." In the Van Buren Street rooms was held the first mothers' convention. I shall never forget how broadly I smiled when, the night before this same convention, Mrs. Crouse came home and told me that she had arranged for an extra hall in case there was an overflow meeting. I laughingly told her that if we had two hundred persons I thought we would be doing well. The next morning at ten o'clock when I arrived at the entrance door downstairs, I had to work my way through the crowd that filled the lobby and stairway. Both the halls

downstairs and upstairs were already packed. Such is the power of faith and a real belief in high ideals!

Today almost every state in the union has its annual meeting or state convention of mothers.

I speak of these facts not in any spirit of boastfulness, because other centers of kindergarten work have done other helpful and constructive things; but I tell it here because it seemed to me but right and fitting that others should know something of the history of this period of the College. When the Kindergarten Club was at its lowest ebb financially and its officers and leaders knew not which way to turn, it was for two years the welcome guest of the college, and met there each Saturday morning. Heads of kindergarten departments, leaders in normal schools, supervisors of great city kindergartens, superintendents of kindergarten associations, heads of social-settlement work, missionaries to foreign lands, Sunday-school writers and workers, organizers of kindergarten clubs and classes, together with scores of earnest mothers and faithful kindergartners, passed out of those doors to the larger life which came to them through their study in the college halls.

It was there that Dr. Snider worked out and unfolded his system of thought which he has given to the world in three volumes upon the subjects of the three world disciplines, Religion, Philosophy and Psychology; a system which shows the slow but certain evolution of the one into the other and helps the student to see and feel that these are the three chief doors that lead the soul to a knowledge of God, the true meaning of nature, and the deep significance of man, or the link between God and nature. He has made the study of the intellect, the will, and feeling practical as well as profoundly thought-producing. Concerning this work of Dr. Snider's, Mr. George P. Brown, editor of the *Home and School Journal*, and one of the organizers of the National Educational Association, says: "It is the star in the east to

all who are seeking the newer and larger thought-life which our times are demanding."

The students of the college have been given a tremendous world-view, first through Froebel's intensely religious vision into the true nature of man, and hence the true meaning of life; to this has been added Dr. Snider's rational insight which has made the vision of Froebel, the poet and seer, a demonstrable fact such as may be applied to the everyday life and conduct of anyone. Certain it is that it has guided both students and teachers until it would seem strange that anyone should doubt the inner evidence of immortality or the inner responsibility of the human soul for its own life. "As is a man's world-view, so is his everyday life."

Could those dumb walls speak of the words of encouragement and aspiration, of insight and inspiration which have been uttered within them, they would tell of treasures of far more value than gold or precious jewels. There were held the famous Literary Schools which have made the names and writings of Homer, Dante, Goethe and Shakespeare familiar to all Chicago and the region round about. There, too, were held the School of Myths and the School of Psychology, both of which had to be given in a larger hall than our college assembly room, but which were planned and pushed into existence in Mrs. Crouse's little office. Both of those schools brought to our platform such men as William T. Harris, Thomas Davidson, Hamilton W. Mabie, Richard G. Moulton, David Swing, and others as great. Those schools opened whole new worlds to me—new views, new insights, new meaning to life which I would not relinquish for any fortune that might be offered me.

We came into our building a young, unknown experiment, so to speak; a feeble little school, with scarcely more than forty students. We left it as a recognized educational institution, with a national, if not world-wide reputation. Pamphlets printed there have been sent out by other educational and

religious organizations all over the world. Books which grew out of the recitations and classes held within its walls have been translated into foreign languages and have gone into many editions in America. Visitors from England, France and Germany, from Australia, New Zealand and the Philippine Islands, from South America and South Africa have come and gone.

I can say for Mrs. Crouse that her devotion and loyalty to our cause never wavered. She sat at her desk day after day, week after week, and month after month through hot weather and through cold weather, relinquishing pleasure, ease and social enjoyment that she might be always at her post here at the college, struggling with problems that would have daunted many a strong heart and would have caused weak souls to have failed long ago. She once said to me, "I feel as if I were turning into a machine," and then she added, "No, not that, so long as I can keep alive an institution which will fill with spiritual aspiration so many lives each year, and can see these girls grow into fine, true, capable young women, my work is not hard. I can afford to give up much that is easy and pleasant and popular." We all endured many inconveniences, such as crowded halls, poorly ventilated rooms and meager furnishings, not to speak of the roar and rattle of the great city, whose din has forever been in our ears.

I once visited a large city normal school and the head of the kindergarten department, with commendable pride, showed me her suite of rooms for classes, for rest rooms, for library and luncheons. She then took me to the manual-training department to which she could send her students for work of that sort. Next we visited the art department where they could revel in the beautiful, and then we went to the department of science, equipped fully with all sorts of tools and laboratory apparatus, as well as with various collections of scientific specimens. Finally I exclaimed, "How rich you are here, nothing seems to be lacking! I never before realized how

meager were our belongings at the Chicago Kindergarten College!" She turned to me and seizing my arm exclaimed, "Never again say that! You are the rich woman! Just think of the enthusiasm with which your girls leave the college, how they go out all over the country and meet all sorts of obstacles and dauntlessly overcome them! They do not require an abundance of material things with which to begin; they have learned to *create the conditions they want*. I sometimes wish my students had less; they too would then be hungry. Do not ever again regret that you have to send out each year a brood of souls that are hungry, eagerly seeking more light, more life, more love!"

No period of the college history is complete without some mention of the steadfast loyalty of its alumnæ. I recall a scene described in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian was shown the fire upon which water was constantly being poured, but which, nevertheless, diminished not nor decreased in heat. On expressing his astonishment at the sight, Christian was taken to the other side of the wall, where he saw someone feeding the fire with oil. Then he understood why the water could not quench it. The love and aspiration of our alumnæ were at all times the oil which kept burning the fire of my enthusiasm over life until no indifference or failure, ill health, lack of funds, or opposition from the outside world, had any effect so long as I could look each week into their faces, and faces such as theirs illuminated with the light that "never was on land or sea."

The Alumnæ Association of the college has become a power to be counted upon in its beautiful pride and love for its alma mater. The students share the responsibility of the college growth and feel definite pride in adding to its size and reputation. All the work that at first was only feeling its way, is now intelligently defined and correlated and all hearts are more united than ever before, until the outlook for the future seems greater and brighter than I

dared hope to picture it. My deepest prayer and most earnest hope is that long after Mrs. Crouse and I have passed into the beyond it may still live and send forth each year a band of noble, earnest and intelligent young women to make the life of childhood brighter and that of womanhood holier and more revered.

Our college remained fourteen years at 10 East Van Buren Street, seven years in larger quarters at 1200 Michigan Boulevard, and thirteen years at 2944 Michigan Boulevard, with added dormitory accommodations, which gradually included almost the entire block between 29th and 30th Street on Michigan Boulevard. The final transfer was made in 1926 to the present beautiful building in Evanston, Illinois.

From 1886 to 1920 I was the scholastic head of our institution, first called Miss Harrison's Training School. In 1887 Mrs. Crouse and I joined forces and added several teachers to the faculty. In 1889 our school again changed its name, this time becoming The Chicago Kindergarten Training School, and in 1891 it was incorporated under the name The Chicago Kindergarten College. Mrs. Crouse was business head and I was president. The college name was changed in 1912 to The National Kindergarten College, and in 1916, when elementary departments were added to the curriculum it became the National Kindergarten and Elementary College.

It was because of the high quality of the work of the Chicago Kindergarten College that the National Kindergarten Association of New York City, organized in 1909 in the home of Mrs. Henry Phipps, invited us, in the summer of 1911, to enter into a form of affiliation which promised to be of mutual benefit. As a result of this invitation and subsequent correspondence I went on to New York and met with their board of trustees, at which time terms of agreement were formed, and the papers were signed in February, 1912.

The National Kindergarten Association has warmly rec-



National Kindergarten and Elementary College, Chicago, 1913-1922

commended the college to young women desiring to become kindergartners. And the college has been of valuable service to the Association in matters requiring expert technical knowledge. The Association is supported by private citizens who are interested in its objective to see that adequate kindergarten facilities of the highest character are provided for the four million boys and girls for whom no kindergartens, as yet, are available. Its aim is to assist, as far as possible, in the solution of kindergarten problems, in cultivating a general understanding of the kindergarten in the public mind, in securing proper legislation and in insuring the best instruction for kindergarten teachers.

In 1913 Dr. P. P. Claxton, then United States Commissioner of Education, invited the National Kindergarten Association to co-operate with him in establishing and maintaining a Kindergarten Division in the United States Bureau of Education at Washington. This was done at the suggestion of Miss Bessie Locke, Corresponding Secretary of the Association. The Association provided the services of a number of employees who, like Miss Locke, were appointed collaborators of the bureau at a nominal salary of one dollar a year, paid by the Government from 1913 until 1919, when an act of Congress terminated the co-operation between the Bureau of Education and the National Kindergarten Association, as well as that of many other organizations assisting in its work.

The lack of accurate information on various phases of the kindergarten indicated the importance of conducting a number of thorough investigations. A compilation of kindergartens, private, public, and mission, made for the first time by the government, showed that in 1913 only one child in nine was receiving the educational advantages to which every child is entitled in a country which advocates equal privileges for all. In 1914, during the affiliation of the National Kindergarten Association with the Federal Government, field

work was started in California for the purpose of putting the kindergarten into every school where twenty-five mothers sent in a petition for it. A campaign was carried on by the Association in other states where favorable laws were secured.

For the purpose of making certain technical researches, the Association secured a list of kindergarten experts whose reputation was nation-wide. The list was submitted to the Commissioner of Education with the suggestion that he invite these experts to form a committee to assist the Bureau of Education in this work. The plan was effected, and this committee afterwards became a standing committee of the International Kindergarten Union, which organization was subsequently invited to assist in conducting the work of the Bureau.

The National Kindergarten Association is now represented on the Board of the National Council of Women, which has passed a resolution urging the ten million members of its constituent organizations to interest themselves in the cause of early education. Through the Association, the Federation of Women's Clubs created a kindergarten section with a national chairman and chairman in each state.

Commissioner Claxton, in co-operation with the National Kindergarten Association, instituted a service to help parents to train their young children in their homes. Articles were secured from mothers who were formerly kindergarten teachers. Upon request these articles were issued weekly to three thousand papers and magazines, having a combined circulation of over fifty million. This service has been continued without interruption by the Association to the present time (1926).

In 1912, through the generosity of Mrs. Henry Phipps, Vice-President of the National Kindergarten Association, and Mrs. George Grant Mason, the Association was enabled to send me to Rome to attend Dr. Montessori's first class for English-speaking teachers. After my return from Rome our

college supervised three experimental classes in Montessori methods for different types of children. These classes were directed by Montessori graduates. I gave lectures on the Montessori work in our summer school. Following these experiments I wrote a pamphlet on the *Montessori Method and the Kindergarten*, which was published by the United States Bureau of Education.

An encouraging report from Major Bradley Martin, President of the National Kindergarten Association, includes among many other evidences of the coming of better homes, better schools, and happier childhood, the following paragraph:

“HOME EDUCATION”

A recent development which affords us much gratification because it so greatly extends our usefulness, is the world-wide demand for our articles on “Home Education.” They are now being used either by publications or educational institutions located in Alaska, Argentina, Austria, Philippine Islands, Canada, Australia, Constantinople, Hawaii, Holland, Japan, Mexico, Colombia, England, Norway, Italy, Uruguay, Yugo-Slavia, Latvia, Chile, Sweden, Denmark, San Salvador, South Africa, Paraguay, Poland, and Hungary.

CHAPTER XVI

In Rome

ON my way to Rome, in 1912, I was met in New York by a friend, who said, "You are going to Rome to study with Dr. Montessori?¹ You, who have given your whole working life to the kindergarten? Do you expect to get anything from *her*?" My reply was, "If I did not expect to get something that was worth-while, I would not spend five months of my life and a thousand dollars, and if I get something which is better than the kindergarten, do you suppose I would hesitate for a moment to accept it? It is not Froebel or Dr. Montessori whom we are to consider, but what is best for the little child." Let me say, before beginning, that I do not think Froebel created a final system of education, nor do I believe Dr. Montessori has uttered the last word. Anything so indefinite as the unfolding of the human soul cannot be grasped by any one mortal. Each teacher may add his or her message; the rest of us can only weigh and accept that which seems to be best.

The friends of Dr. Montessori have, in my judgment, done more harm than good in their proclamation of the new system of education. She herself calls it "a pedagogical experiment," and her own work "a pedagogical laboratory." She expresses an earnest desire that there may be other laboratories established for the study of the outer and inner life of the little children. To my mind Dr. Montessori's greatest contribution to education, has been her anthropology rather than her didactic materials.

Anthropology is one of the methods of studying man.

¹Madame Maria Montessori is a physician, scientist, author and world-famous educator, whose ideas have influenced almost every school in Europe and America.

Philosophy studies his essential nature. Language gives us his intellectual development. History shows his volitional growth. Art reveals his emotional evolution. All of which are parts of the whole man. But to return to anthropology. It is not the mere study of the bodily structure, but it is the study of the living organism with the inter-play of organs one upon the other, and of the influence of environment upon the body. In other words, it is not mere statue, shape, and weight, but how these are revealed in determining the child's physical life and its needs. Froebel lived before the science of anthropology had been fully developed. It began as a branch of zoölogy; that is, a study and measurement of the bodies of human beings. In zoölogy at the present date, we study not only the structural forms of animals, but their habits and manner of life.

The remarkable prominence gained by Dr. Montessori has undoubtedly come from the great work which she has done with imbecile children, who as a class were segregated in Italy as unteachable. She believed earnestly that each and every one of these children had a psychic life or soul, to which she appealed in every possible way, having full faith that the spirit was stronger than the body and could answer her call, even though handicapped and hindered in every way. Her reward was the satisfaction of learning that these hopelessly helpless children would be taught to dress and undress themselves, perform many simple services for themselves, and also learn to read and write. Later on, her success with mentally deficient children was even more remarkable. Her anthropological study of their bodies gave her the needed clew as to what help each one most needed. In this, she followed the suggestions and methods of Dr. Seguin, which fact she frankly acknowledges.

In my report on the Montessori Method published by the United States Bureau of Education in 1913, I endeavored to give as fair and clear an idea as I could of Dr. Montessori's theory and practice, showing wherein she agreed with the

kindergarten and wherein she differed from it, and where she could help us. I also gave what seemed to me to be limitations of her theory. Therefore I shall in this connection give only a brief sketch of one morning's visit to a Montessori "Casa dei Bambini." This one we visited is a school for children who can pay well—thirty lire a month, and twelve lire additional if the omnibus carries them. It is on the terrace of the Pincian, the old "Hill of Gardens," that this lovely little child garden is planted, only I hesitate to use that name, because it is so unlike our kindergarten. It is a "Casa dei Bambini," rather, as the name over the door says, and is the end of a great pile of buildings beginning in the Piazza del Popolo below, with the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, which was built on the spot where Nero was buried, and which was supposed to be the haunt of evil spirits until this church exorcised them. Behind the church is the old monastery, and as the buildings climb the hill the rear opens from a fine terrace, and we are at the door of this "House of Childhood," filled with the happiest little sprites one can imagine. It is not easy to visit any schools in Rome, but we got a card of introduction from our consul to Madame Montessori and my Italian teacher had a friend who had taught the previous year in this school, so they took us there. The heart of the whole method is the development of all the senses—eye, ear and touch equally. At the same time the children are gaining habits of order, of self-help and courtesy, to a surprising degree.

It was nearly ten before all the children arrived. As they came they removed their coats and put on long aprons. There was no hurry and seemingly no absolute time for beginning. Those who had come early played about, or wrote for us on the blackboard and showed us their drawings. They were from three to six years old. First they dusted their chairs and the little tables at which they sat, doing it as carefully and thoroughly as housemaids; then they all seated themselves

and had a game of "silence." The object of this was to quiet and calm them, and prepare the minds for attention, also to test and train the ear. The teacher stood in the back of the room and whispered a name, and the child called rose and went to her, trying not to make a sound with chair or feet. They thoroughly enjoyed it and listened acutely, each one hoping to hear his name. When all stood there, in perfect silence, they were dismissed with a smiling word, and each one scampered to some drawer, of which there were many around the wall, and chose whatever she wished to work with. Some worked at tables, while several children lay on a carpet in the back of the room and fitted blocks of graduated sizes, one on top of another, or played with the long, square rods of different lengths, colored alternately red and blue, by means of which they learn arithmetic. One small girl of five was at the blackboard doing the following sums in addition:

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \text{ plus } 1 \text{ plus } 2 \text{ equal} \\ 7 \text{ " } 1 \text{ " } 2 \text{ " } \\ 1 \text{ " } 2 \text{ " } 3 \text{ " } \\ 5 \text{ " } 4 \text{ " } 1 \text{ " } \end{array}$$

She read the first numbers and then turned to the table where she had arranged the square rods regularly from the longest, of one metre, to the shortest, of one decimetre. She selected the one of six decimetres, counting the alternate red and blue divisions to make sure there were six; then took the one of two and the one alone, and laid them along to form one continuous line, then counted the decimetres as marked in red and blue, and turned to the board and wrote the answer—nine. When she had finished all, she recorded them neatly in a copy book.

Each child seemed to be doing something different from his comrades, using all the apparatus obtainable and used in America now, and without adult compulsion. The stimulus seemed to be that which one child feels from seeing another do something. Therein lies much of the wisdom, I think, of this

plan of allowing them freedom of choice in their work. The children were free to move about, to go to another's chair or table, which makes it possible for children to spend as many hours as they do, from nine to four in some schools, with no fatigue, and actually gaining in flesh and weight more rapidly, I am told, than other children without this happy and useful training. It was marvelous to see how they were helped by the sense of touch, and how acute it had become. One little girl had a box of many pieces of cotton of equal size and shape, also velvets, and she was feeling these between her fingers and naming each kind. Another asked to be blindfolded and was then weighing in her hands thin squares of wood, of equal shape and size, but different weight, and placing them in piles according to weight. They distinguished form, texture and weight equally well by the sense of touch. They used the frames arranged for teaching them to tie strings, to button and to hook, thus learning to dress themselves. After an hour, they went out of doors. There on the hill-side were many small square gardens, one for each child, many of whom had brought plants to set out. They hoed and planted and watered, and showed remarkable skill in the use of tools. After this period of activity they returned and had drawing. I think they all did this at once, but I was so full of enjoyment I may have overlooked something. The smallest children simply filled in geometrical outlines, which they traced from a wooden pattern, the inside having been removed from the wooden insets by which they learn the different forms, oval, triangle, and squares. They learned the use of the pencil by shading as evenly as possible the inside of each figure, and were so pleased with their accomplishments that they brought them to show to us. When they had better control of the pencil they were given an outline drawing of a flower and leaf to fill in with proper color. As children often do, they sometimes took a blue pencil to color a leaf; then the teacher asked them

to look at one of the plants in the room, and they instantly saw the mistake, and said, "verde."

One means they had of learning color was through grading bobbins wound with colored silk, and they were very accurate. I noticed that each object was put away at once after the child had used it, and even in drawing, when through with one pencil they put it at once into the box before another was pulled out. But this sense of order was most beautifully shown in the arrangements for and the eating of the lunch. Each child thoroughly scrubbed his hands at his own appointed place where individual towel and brushes were kept. The patience with which they waited, as the "mæstra" was half an hour late, was the most surprising thing I have ever seen in children at that age, not even touching their bread and other food brought from home, though I know their little mouths must have been watering. One hour after lunch the children went home.

I did not see in my private visits or my class observations any definite training in co-operative group work or social service, save in the matter of taking turns at serving the luncheon. But I did see a great revelation of things yet-to-be, when the educational world comes to a fuller realization that information is merely a tool, a most necessary tool, but never an end. The real end of education is individual growth and the right use of that growth is in the service of humanity.

Dear Ones at Home:

Lessons and lectures have begun and three mornings of observation in the "Casa dei Bambini," with notes to be written up, Italian studied, books read, and duties attended to, so good-bye for the present to rhapsodies over ruins of Rome! Though I may occasionally send you a few pictures.

It is hard to tear oneself away from the history, art, romance, and poetry, by which one is surrounded on every side in this fascinating spot! For example, we went out for a drive

yesterday morning, thinking we would observe for half an hour, the procession of soldiers to be reviewed by the king before he presented the gold medals to the regiments that had won special honors in the war with Tripoli; and three hours and a half had slipped by before our return to our pension. Yet who could have resisted the sight presented by the long lines of infantry representing every regiment of the army of "United Italy," coming from Piedmont, Lombardy, and Venezia in the north, on down to Calabria and Sicily in the south. Then came the cavalry superbly mounted, with helmets of steel and waving plumes, gold and silver epaulets, and brilliant sashes and flashing swords—tall, proud, powerful men. Recall the fact that for more than a thousand years these peoples had been warring with each other; feuds, hatreds, and treacheries had established barriers that seemed unbreakable. First one and then another of them called in foreign powers to help them fight against some neighboring province, even at the risk—in many cases with the certainty—of this same foreign alliance tyrannizing over them for a century or more. Then you will realize what this long line of marching soldiers meant, a united, loyal nation, born and grown to a conquering power in the short space of fifty years! There is nothing like it in all history.

"The legions of Rome!" I whispered to myself. And to make the illusion stronger they were followed by company after company of Lybian soldiers, brown-skinned and thick-lipped, true African types, clad in native costumes of short white tunics, girdled at the waist, red fezes on their heads, and many of them bare-footed. Some wore Oriental sandals strapped with leather thongs on their bare feet, yet each one carried a modern gun and knapsack. And their Italian officers carried their unsheathed swords as proudly as any sheik could have carried his spear. It was a wonderful sight, this new, young nation of "United Italy," already colonizing and bringing colonial troops back to "Rome the Eternal" to add

to the splendor of a Roman holiday. My mind harked back to the days of Coriolanus, to the Scipios, to Sulla and Cinna, to Pompey and Cæsar, until the huzzas and shouts of the people who crowded every foot of standing-room along the way, seemed to me to be the *Vox populi* which Coriolanus and Tiberius, proud and victorious generals of old Rome despised, but of which Augustus and Titus knew the true value, and used to augment their power.

And yet, there was a difference, and what a difference! There were no chained captives, no vessels of gold and silver, or other precious treasures of conquering provinces. That which stirred the vast throng of spectators to the greatest demonstration was the remnant of that first regiment, only a score or two left, of the thousand brave men who had been cut down by the treachery of the Bedouins, and their tattered and torn flag. How they seemed to love this banner, and how flowers were showered down upon them from all the balconies of the houses and the men's hats waved and the women's handkerchiefs! They were bringing back to Rome a treasure. One far greater than columns of porphyry or statues of marble, or chests of gold, for they had brought home the world's homage to their courage, and a universal recognition of the fact that Italy, the beautiful, but "weak, effeminate Italy," which for the past two or three hundred years England had pitied, France had dominated, and Austria and Russia had looked down upon, was gone. "Italia" was now strong and brave and capable. It was a gift well worth the price paid for it!

How Elizabeth Barrett Browning would have rejoiced in the sight! I must re-read her poem on Italy. And Cavour, the patient far-sighted Cavour, how he would have gloried in the thought that his prophecy had come true! First had come "United Italy," and then "United Italians"; for side by side in this famous regiment marched troops of Tuscany and Umbria and Latium, and it was Cavour's statesmanship

that had filled each regiment with men of all the provinces. When one of his colleagues said, "We have made Italy; it now remains to be seen if we can make Italians," he replied, "We will make them."

But on came the procession. My thoughts had hurried through a thousand, through two thousand years, while this pageant was passing over the very ground that had echoed to the tramp of armies that had made the whole world tremble. And now came the King's Guards, about fifty mounted knights with breast-plates and helmets and plumes sweeping far down their backs, and glittering medals of rank and distinction, and magnificent trimming of gold on collar and gauntlets and bridles. How the eyes of our kindergarten children would have sparkled at the sight of "real *live* knights" for so they looked in bearing as well as in trappings. Then came a row of six officers and a quietly dressed horseman in the midst of them, with no epaulets, no medals, no gold embroideries, no helmet, no shield, no weapon of offense or defence upon him—and the huzzas of the people grew wild again, street urchins threw their hats into the air, the velvet skull-caps came off the heads of the German students, and artisans in blue cotton blouses, cooks in white jackets, and leather-aproned mechanics, stolid faced laborers clapped their hands. A score of cavalrymen closed up the rear, and I was told the King had passed by.

He was the quiet-looking man unarmed save with the love which his people bore him, and without other ornamentation than the badge of truth and justice, a king who was trying to serve his country wisely, and yet this simple, unostentatious man was the descendant of a line of kings who had reigned eight hundred and fifty years. I wonder what some of those arrogant old emperors of Rome would have thought of such modesty. It had been the custom, we are told, that when any member of the royal family entered a theatre or concert hall, the performance, no matter what it might be, was delayed,

while the orchestra played the national hymn. The present king has put a stop to this and he and his family enter as do other respectable citizens of Rome. The contrast between him and the rulers of the Roman Empire brought me the thought: "Surely Italy has come unto her own in a stronger, better way than in her ancient days of glory. What may she not accomplish in the centuries yet to come?"

As we drove home we passed the Roman Forum where so many of the triumphs and victories of Rome had been celebrated, and the tall pillars that yet remain standing after their two thousand years of hardship, the ruined sites of temples, once the wonder of the world, and the broken fragments of almost forgotten basilicas where laws of justice were first formulated, seemed to prove the futility of the pomp and pride of today. A breath from the seven hills of Rome carried the thought that "man is as the grass of the field. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." But I replied, "No! Man is ever advancing towards spiritual greatness. Contrast the young king today with your jewel-laden, selfish-hearted emperors; contrast free Italy with an enslaved Roman world!"

I can give you but a faint idea of the stimulation to thought and imagination which this life in Rome offers. But I must turn away from the "glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome." I must even ignore the "New Italy" and turn my attention exclusively to conjugating Italian verbs, learning those pesky little adverbs that have half a dozen different meanings, and trying to remember six-syllable adjectives; to anthropological experiments, stereognostic testing of the young child's senses, hygienic dietetics, and the technical manipulation of the beautiful *dottorressa's* didactic materials.

Good-bye,

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

Dear Ones at Home:

And now for the promised Christmas letter. First of all, you must keep in mind the fact that Rome has an atmosphere made up of the occurrences, recollections, associations and suggestions of more than two thousand years of western or occidental civilization in the broad sense of that term, certainly of the life of Europe. Events that would be insignificant in one of our American cities bring with them here a rush of associations that are overwhelming. Take for example, this Christmas festival time which celebrates the birth of Christ on earth. Of course all recognize and rejoice in it. But here in Rome, one is surrounded by the ruins of magnificent temples erected in pagan times to commemorate man's power of communicating with his god or gods. We stand on earth made red with the blood of sacrifices long before the Christian era came. The catacombs and colosseum, still real enough to be touched with hands and gazed upon with eyes, bring a realization of the strength and depth of the highest form of religion that the world has ever known, which enabled the early Christians to hide in damp, dark, underground chambers permeated with the earthy smell of the grave, in order that they might teach and preach the immortality of the human soul; grim reminders also of their readiness to be torn to death by wild beasts in the arena rather than relinquish the message that the Christ had brought to earth. We live so far away from those times of testing faith that it is impossible for us in America to conceive what the birth of Christ meant to these heroic souls. Yet a vestige of it has come down to these Romans in the name by which they designate Christmas Day. They call it *La Natale*, The Birthday, just as we speak of the Book, Bible. No other title is needed to describe it.

This religious significance of Christmas is in evidence here on all sides. Instead of store-counters piled high with fancy cravats, gloves, silk stockings, manicure sets, cheap gew-gaws, such as we see displayed in Chicago as appropriate Christmas

gifts, the almost innumerable shops on all the streets of Rome have placed in their windows copies of the great masters' ideals of the Nativity. These are to be found in almost every medium, marble, bronze, alabaster, water-colors, engravings, etchings, photographs, and the omnipresent post-cards; even the toy shops show a preponderating number of Christmas angels, Christmas stars, toy Christmas trees, and other suggestions of the great natal day of the Christ Child.

Yesterday morning Miss Woodson and I spent an hour loitering about one of the larger stores in the toy region, and stopped before the windows of the other toy shops. Yesterday afternoon we went to the "Christmas Eve Fair" in the poorer district of Rome. It is held each year in an open space which in the day of the Roman emperor was a race course. All along one side were erected small open booths in which were Christmas wares. And throngs of poor Italian mothers with their broods of black-eyed, olive-skinned little ones came and went, buying hesitatingly, yet lovingly, a few cents' worth of the wares, while the fortunate child whose mother could spend five or ten soldi (twenty soldi equals twenty-five cents) carried away his treasure with a tenderness and joy, such as is unknown to our American children, who are surfeited with big dolls, entire sets of doll-house furnishings and mechanical toys. And yet the Italian Christmas toys, with rare exceptions, were almost entirely reproductions in the cheapest kind of plaster of the Nativity. There were plaster "bambini" in plaster mangers, plaster madonnas in every conceivable attitude of love, reverence, worship, or sometimes of stolid, non-expressiveness, according to the skill and religious fervor of the designer. There were plaster St. Josephs, old, middle-aged, and young, plaster shepherds in picturesque peasant clothing, plaster angels, balancing in the air hung by threads or wires, plaster workmen, each and all bringing their offerings of fruit, of flowers, of fagots, of fowls, of sacks of wool, of whatever earthly possessions they had. The expression of some of their

faces, crude and coarse plaster and cheap paint though they were, thrilled me. These figurines were so devout, so awe-inspired, as if they, too, had seen the vision of Bethlehem.

There are naïve and childlike plaster cows that seem to "chew and chew and chew" like Jessie Davis' cow in *Uncle Remus*, and houses and pigs and sheep and even roosters and donkeys, all represented as kneeling according to the legend which tells that at the time of the Nativity all the animals prostrated themselves in reverence. But the crowning splendor of the imagination of the simple unknown modelers of these figurines were the three kings of the Orient. All the special decorations of robes, ermines, and jewels, that the starved fancy of poverty, or perhaps I should say, the rich fancy of the poor, could picture in plaster and red and gold paint were lavished on these small figures. They were invariably the old king with his crown in outstretched hands, or already placed on the ground before the Christ Child, while he knelt in devout attitude before the King of kings; then a middle-aged king with a box of gold or a tray of jewels. The third king was sometimes a young man in as gorgeous clothing as plaster and bright paint could suggest, and oftener still an Ethiopian in Turkish attire. These three groups; Joseph, Mary and the Christ Child, the three shepherds, and the three kings of the Orient—varied as to the degree of artistic representation from fairly good plaster casts which sold for a lire apiece to mere masses of almost shapeless plaster, painted in blotches of color, which could be bought for the smallest coin. But, oh, the love, the tenderness that lit the eyes and played over the face of the child who came into possession of one or more of the wee sacred dolls! I watched one little fellow, not more than five years old, arrange and rearrange his group of the Madonna, the bambino in the manger, and a king of the Orient. No little American girl ever set and reset her toy tea table with more careful precision, and no American boy of the same age ever evidenced more concern in getting his toy engine

started than did this little Italian in telling and re-telling to himself with his precious toys the visit of a king to the lowly manger.

On the principal street corners were stands of fresh-cut flowers, roses, geraniums, violets, mignonette, and heliotrope, all as bright and dewy as if just gathered. Back of them were masses of holly and mistletoe and many flowers and pots of various sizes, in which were planted branches of fir trees as small Christmas trees, some not two feet, some three, none more than four feet in height. Many of the streets of this city of hills are so steep that they are ascended by stairs, and on these stairs, in many places were flower stands, continuing half way up, making terraces of brilliant color against the gray weathered or mellow white marble steps. Everybody who had a soldi seemed to be buying flowers, whole armfuls of them. We saw only a few people, mostly tourists, loaded with packages, but many scores, old and young, rich and poor, carrying flowers, enough to decorate a large-sized room.

A common sight was that of boys from the campagna with a load of fresh-cut, wild holly on their shoulders, and, frequently, small donkeys loaded with masses of holly and pine branches on each side, bigger than they themselves were. The scene was so joyous, fresh, natural, and so simple that it made me long for a better and more sacred Christmas custom at home. We came home late, tired out with the new and intensely interesting day of Roman preparation for Christmas. On reaching our dear signora's pension, we found a lovely Christmas Eve dinner awaiting us on a flower-decked table. After dinner we were all invited into the signora's pretty parlor, where stood a beautiful Christmas tree, lighted with candles and electric-light bulbs, and trimmed with all sorts of nonsensical toys and glittering spangles, with wee toy birds perched on the branches and "the old man of the woods" with his wife standing at the foot of the tree.

After we had admired the tree sufficiently, dishes of various kinds of confectionery were passed around, and while we were munching these, from behind the tree were brought forth packages of Christmas presents with bits of holly tucked into the red, white, and green ribbons, Italy's national colors, with which the packages were tied. There was one for each guest and each member of the household. Mine was a soft leghorn box, filled with the pretty Roman sweets, each piece of which is wrapped up in a small box with a picture on it, just as dainty as can be. They use very little candy in Italy. We are told it is reserved for festival occasions. When we proposed to an American lady, who has been here seven years, that we buy each of the maids a box of candy, she said they would scarcely know what to do with it, but that a bunch of flowers would please them very much.

After the distribution of the presents, with the usual chatter and laughter and thanks, all four of the maids, including one old gray-haired cook who has been with Signora Colossa seventeen years, filed into the room and stood in a line as rigidly as soldiers. Then each was presented with a good-sized bundle, and making a low bow to the Signora, they filed out. It was all done so quaintly and quietly that it was reminiscent of medieval times when lords and their vassals lived together as one family group. Later wine was served, or rather, "liqueur" in tiny wine cups, and we stood and drank to our Signora's health, for which she thanked us. She is so charming, so full of animation, and yet with such a gentle refinement of manner that she influences all who come in contact with her. Still later there was some good music, and then those who were going to the midnight mass in one of the churches, departed and we, who dared not risk the chill of an unheated church at midnight, with its mosaic marble floors and stone walls, bade the dear Signora good night and retired. It was a beautiful Christmas Eve.

Love to all,

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

CHAPTER XVII

Lecturing in the Cause of Childhood

THE publicity which the Chicago newspapers had given to my Wednesday morning classes for mothers, in 1885-86, brought invitations for my lectures from Boston to San Francisco and from northern Minnesota to Texas.

Dramatic presentation was a natural and unconscious characteristic in my lecturing, and a ready use of expressive language came from my familiarity with good literature, but an orderly presentation of the subject-matter had to be acquired. I had learned that clear thinking and definite arrangement were necessary if one was to make a permanent impression upon an audience. Orderly arrangement of my topic had to be learned; here is where my lack of university training had to be made good. My more or less informal talks to mothers had helped me somewhat, but formal lectures, for which the college was paid fifty dollars and all expenses, was a different proposition. But our school needed the money thus to be earned, and misunderstood childhood needed to be understood; so I set myself to the task.

I never read from manuscript, as my lectures were rarely given before a university trained audience. At the time of which I write, the universities had not acknowledged the deep significance of the underlying thought of the kindergarten.¹ An untrained audience is apt to grow restless unless the speaker addresses it directly. I seldom carried my notes or headings to the platform, unless they concerned statistics. But for years I carefully wrote my lectures in full, frequently working far into the night when the mood was upon me. Then I condensed the lecture into paragraphs, and finally

¹Exception must be made in the case of President Eliot of Harvard.

reduced the paragraphs into a heading, oftentimes to a single word. These headings I committed to memory so as to have the thought which I wished to present unfold in a logical process. Then I knew I was free to go on the platform and speak as the mood prompted. Frequently a new illustration of the point in question would come to me while I was speaking and would be used, adding freshness to the lecture.

By thus training myself to speak without my notes, I had the advantage of perceiving the response or non-response of the audience. In the case of non-response I would restate the subject just elucidated, treating it in a different way.

I know now that if I had had the university training, which is today free to all women who choose to work for it, I would have been saved much time and taxing effort which was expended in preparation for the ordeal of presenting a great cause to untrained audiences. I usually won my audience before undertaking to present the subject which must necessarily show to them their limitations and mistakes in the treatment of their children. This is always a delicate subject, and sometimes a dangerous one, if not presented tactfully. Occasionally a single face in an audience of hundreds saved the day.

I recall an occasion of a grand rally for a new movement in education. We had gathered together an intelligent audience of a thousand people, when one of our speakers, a popular clergyman from Evanston, telephoned us that he had missed his train and would be nearly half an hour late. We who were in charge of the meeting were in a state of consternation. The two other speakers on the program had finished and left the hall. In the confusion of the moment we could think of no prominent man in the audience who could be called upon to fill the emergency. Then someone suggested that I should go on the platform and tell a fairy tale, prolonging it until the signal should be given me that the belated speaker had arrived.

Here is where my thoroughness of preparation and my habit of speaking without my notes served me. Before I fully realized what I was about to do, the explanation was made to the audience by the chairman of the evening and I was launched into the telling of one of my stories, "The Line of Golden Light." It was a story which could be easily lengthened or shortened. I began it in the same simple language and dramatic presentation with which I would have told it to children. I had given the two first scenes in the story, when the thought swept over me that I was doing an untoward thing in treating an educated and intelligent audience as if they were little children. I was almost panic-stricken, ready to flee from the platform, when I perceived a prominent physician, well known for his scholarly attainments and professional success, leaning forward with an expression of genuine interest, and his face saved the day.

On another occasion I had been asked to come to a neighboring city to speak before a woman's club on the religious training of little children. I prepared the subject-matter for the evening with the thought in mind of an audience of well-to-do intelligent women, of the woman's-club type. In their effort to make the lecture a success, they had invited the board of education to sit on the platform with me. The president of the club had also asked the superintendent and all principals of the city schools to be their guests for the evening. I knew nothing of this arrangement until just as I was entering the hall, a friend whispered to me, "There are fifteen members of our school board on the platform, and about half of them are owners of breweries." I glanced quickly at the stalwart and somewhat rotund set of men who formed a semi-circle on the platform and my heart grew faint within me.

I had prepared for my opening plea, a tender and reverent treatment of religion in the home training of little children and less formal religious instruction. To Froebel, the awakening of a feeling of reverence for the unseen but ever-present

and loving Creator of man and his universe was the central thought of his educational ideal. That this awakening should begin at the earliest manifestation of consciousness was emphasized over and over again in all his explanations of his work. That this same reverence should be in the heart of the mother, he took as a matter of course. All future wonder-questions of the child's growing mind concerning the marvels of nature should be answered as truly as the mother could answer them, but always with the same reverence for the power and wisdom of this all-loving God. This was to be the beginning of my plea that education, the drawing out, or development of all that is best in the child, is only possible when religion, not theology, is the basis of the home training, and of the school.²

I had the conviction that this meant not only a new and deeper religious life in the heart of all who had the care of young children, but that it also meant the discarding of much of the educational theory of the day. You can imagine the effect upon me of the seemingly self-satisfied row of men behind me, their authoritative attitude, and the rather bored expression on the faces of many of the tired-looking men who sat immediately in front of me. I floundered badly and was seized with a sudden fear that I was going to lose the opportunity of presenting a great cause to an influential audience. I realized that the preamble which I had prepared concerning the right reverence on the part of the mother would not do. So I began to speak in a matter-of-fact tone of the interest which I had found in the German nation in their educational problems, over and above that shown in America, and I gave one or two of my experiences while studying in Germany. Having thus smoothed away any in-

²All the splendid advance that has since been made in the scientific testing of each child's native endowment, the recognition of the enormous added interest that comes with the increasing understanding of the creative activity of the child, and the education by development, often seemingly slow but the surest training into a sense of justice and of sympathy, were to Froebel merely means to the great end—the consciousness of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.

dications of assumed superiority, I began somewhat haltingly on the topic of the evening. In a few moments my eye was attracted by the face of a woman far back in the audience. It was luminous with eager interest. The rest of the lecture was spoken to her and when I had finished I knew, from the hearty applause, that I had won my audience, school board and all.

I have also had some amusing experiences arising from the manner in which I was introduced to a new audience, though in general the chairmen of the occasions were kind and gracious. There was one time, however, when I came near losing my composure because of the ludicrous situation. At a state convention of teachers, the Hon. Philander P. Claxton, then United States Commissioner of Education, was to give the opening address and I was to speak the next morning. Just before the lecture hour a telegram came from the Commissioner, stating that a wreck ahead of his train would prevent his getting to the convention in time for the evening address. The committee decided that I would be the best substitute, as I was to speak the next morning. This would disarrange the program less; so they came to me and explained the matter. Somewhat hesitatingly I agreed to meet the emergency. It so chanced that there was present at this convention an eighty-four-year-old man who had taught Commissioner Claxton when he was a boy, and the old gentleman asked the privilege of introducing the Commissioner.

In their anxiety to get a substitute and readjust the program, the committee forgot to explain clearly to the aged pedagogue the change in the speaker for the evening. Therefore he was considerably confused when he was introduced to me and told that I was to be the speaker of the evening. He stared at me in blank astonishment, merely ejaculating, "A woman! a woman to take P. P. Claxton's place!" As we walked up the aisle together, he turned and looked at me once or twice and muttered, "Humph!" When the time came

for the introductory speech, he rose, rather reluctantly, and said in a stately oratorical tone, "I came here tonight expecting to introduce to you one of my boys, the Honorable P. P. Claxton, one of the noblest men I have ever known, a man to whom the whole nation is indebted. He is not only prominent as an educator, but a gentleman of the highest quality! A man who—" At this moment he seemed to recall the fact that Mr. Claxton was not present to be introduced, and he suddenly stopped, turned and looked at me for a moment, and said in a changed tone of voice, "and I am to introduce *a woman* instead. A Miss Harrison who came from some northern city to instruct us as to how to bring up our children." Then the eloquent address which he had carefully prepared gained the mastery in his mind, and he swept into a dramatic peroration concerning the fine qualities of "the speaker of the evening," injecting one or two Latin quotations, and continuing for about ten minutes along this line. He told how he had known "the speaker of the evening" in childhood, and how proud he was to introduce so gifted a man to such an audience. Then he sat down, entirely unconscious of the mistake he had made.

The chairman of the evening gracefully stated who I was, and my topic, and also that Dr. Claxton would speak the next morning.

The suppressed amusement on the faces of some of the people very nearly upset me, as I, too, was thinking of how deliciously comic the incident was. I had spoken for a few minutes before I succeeded in gaining the serious attention of the audience. However, the evening passed off fairly well. Next morning Dr. Claxton spoke, but not until his octogenarian friend had repeated word for word his introductory speech of the night before including the Latin quotations.

Some of my most interesting contacts with worth-while people came from these lecture experiences. I was nearly always one of the speakers at our annual International Kin-

ergarten Union conventions. I had frequent invitations to speak at state teachers' associations, and my note-books show that I was one of the speakers in this or that department of the National Education Association for twenty years. I was a member of the Board of the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Association and was generally one of the speakers.

In May, 1910, I received a cordial letter from Mrs. Frederick Schoff, then President of the National Congress of Parent-Teacher Association, asking me to speak on Sunday afternoon, June 12, at their Denver meeting.

The association at that time numbered several thousand members of the most earnest and intelligent women of America. It now numbers nearly a million, including men as well as women. I accepted the invitation, although our own college commencement was to take place June 9, and I was to deliver the commencement address before the Cleveland Kindergarten Training School on Wednesday, June 15, which would necessitate my leaving for Denver on Friday, in order to arrive there Saturday evening, speak Sunday afternoon, and leave Monday morning for Cleveland. The appointed hour for my address was just before sunset, and the place was the largest church in the city. Denver people never do things by halves, and they gave me a fine audience. Every seat in the church was filled.

On the platform, with Mrs. Schoff and myself, sat a Catholic priest and a Unitarian clergyman. One gave the invocation and the other pronounced the benediction. If I remember rightly the church was Presbyterian. These facts alone were enough to arouse the best in any earnest speaker, pleading for a universal cause of human interest. I had taken as my theme, *America's Greatest Asset*. I enumerated instance after instance of our nation's material wealth, in mines and forest, in vast plains and mighty river-ways; her energy and ability in manufacturing and commerce. I then asked the

audience to weigh all these in one scale, and our nation's children in the other; her wealth and power over against the future citizens who were to carry forward, or to drag down her great ideals. Then, and only then, I said, could we know what this organized association of mothers and teachers must mean for the future. I think I was probably at my best, for when I had finished, I was in that exaltation of spirit, and at the same time exhaustion of body, which comes when one has spoken from the depth of one's soul.

There was, for a minute or two, an intense silence. Then the great organ just over my head pealed forth a familiar prelude and a wonderfully fresh and beautiful contralto voice began that beloved anthem, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth." It filled the church, not only with a volume of music, but also with a depth of reverence which everyone present must have felt. The organ seemed to be in such perfect harmony with the voice that its volume rose and fell with the emotions of the singer. I afterwards learned that the organist was the finest in Denver. Phrase after phrase was sung with the same wonderful, worshipful tone, rising in sublime faith as the hymn reached the end.

I was thrilled. I knew that the song came from above me, and it seemed to soar far above the organ. The thought flashed through my mind, "Is this the way that the angels sang to the shepherds of old?" I have heard much good music in my life, but I do not recall ever having been more stirred by the mood of the singer. The shadows of the approaching evening began to creep into the corners of the church, and still the singer sang on. The organ accompanied her and softly repeated the melody after each stanza. The large audience remained in the same hushed silence. Had they fallen to their knees, the sense of worship would have been complete. When it ended, I was aware that the Catholic priest was standing beside me. I was so absorbed by the song



Elizabeth Harrison, at the Period When She Was Lecturing in
the Cause of Education

that I had been unconscious of his coming forward. He lifted his hand and the audience rose to receive the benediction.

Then, four or five of our *alumnæ*, who had married and were living in Denver, came forward to introduce their husbands to me, and after that a number of the audience shook hands with me and said pleasant things, such as kindly people are apt to say on such occasions. And I was back once more in the hurly-burly of life, but the trance into which the lovely voice had taken me came again as soon as I was alone that night, and brought with it the vision of the singing angels that the early Italian masters so loved to paint, and the experience of the early afternoon re-interpreted them to me. It must have been just such reverent, worshipful singing that filled them with the seemingly superhuman power to create figures on canvas that still sing joyfully through all the years of weary doubt and blighting sin that have come and gone since that short, but marvelous era, when religion expressed itself in radiant forms of beauty.

Of course I asked who the singer was, and was told that she was the young daughter of my friend, Mrs. David O. Mears, a vice-president of the National Congress of Parent-Teacher Association; and that her voice had attracted much attention from the time she was a child. My informant added, "She is as beautiful as she is gifted, and as lovable as she is beautiful."

Later on, I had my impression of the remarkable and rare beauty of her voice confirmed by some of the hosts of friends who had learned to love her character as well as her voice. Dean Lord of Oberlin College wrote, "She was not only a member of the Greek Chorus of a Greek play, which one of my classes produced, but on certain occasions, she *was the chorus*. In fact it would have been impossible to have produced the play without her." President William J. Hutchens, of Bearea College, former professor in Oberlin Theological

Seminary, wrote her mother: "You need ask nothing greater in life than to have been the mother of Helen Mears."

She did not live long. Hers is a short story, but one that makes life seem more beautiful whenever I recall it.

My lecturing before so many varied audiences taxed my body beyond its strength and, not infrequently, a lecture in some important place would have to be called off, or a substitute sent. This created some discontent and criticisms as the disappointed audience did not realize that I was oftentimes lying in bed too ill to raise my head. I know now that I should have declined all outside lectures and concentrated my efforts upon my Chicago work, but I did not know it then, and in time I had to pay dearly for the lesson. In 1919, after an examination of my heart, two expert physicians told me that never again was I to attempt to speak in class-room or on a public platform. And the work goes forward in other hands, many of whom are far better prepared for it than I had been. I was embarked on a different route in education, and what seemed a handicap really meant freedom for writing.

At the close of a course of lectures given each day successively for a week in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1888, a representative from a publishing company of New York, came to me and said, "I can guarantee you three thousand dollars if you can get these lectures into book form for our firm." I replied that I was not a writer, that much that I had said in my Cleveland lectures had come spontaneously into my mind at the moment of utterance. This was true, although I had carefully prepared my outlines and main arguments.

On reaching home I told Mrs. Crouse of the offer, and she from that time on urged my attempting the book, her most telling argument being that we so desperately needed the money in our college work. I was much troubled in mind as to whether I should undertake it or let the proposition go.

I felt utterly unprepared for authorship, which I held as one of the great callings of mankind. A few other friends heard of the publisher's offer and added their argument to that of Mrs. Crouse, although for a different reason. They wanted the book for a husband or for a mother-in-law or some other doubting Thomas to read.

To the above arguments were added the earnest requests of the mothers of my classes in Chicago and elsewhere. I had also received letters from isolated mothers, shut in by home cares which could not be laid aside, cut off by distances too great for them to attend any of the mothers' classes; I received such pleas as "How can we get the kindergarten training for our little ones; you say the kindergarten was first started for mothers," or "The kindergarten books were written for mothers, can we not have them simplified so that we too can understand them as do your mothers in the cities and larger towns?" or "Surely no one needs help more than we mothers, and no one would more eagerly apply any new insight that we can really get hold of."

In one of my mothers' classes was an earnest intelligent Russian woman. At the close of her course of lessons, she came to me and said, "I want you to give me the name of every book that has been written on the subject of the kindergarten—and cannot a list be made of such material as might be used advantageously in homes that have not an atom of knowledge concerning child welfare and the instincts and desires of early child life?"

Then she added with a wan smile, "In fact I want all the help you can possibly give me on the subject of child nurture, because I am going on a four months' visit to my family in Moscow and I want to spend every hour that is possible while there in teaching and preaching the gospel of Froebel. I have a large family of sisters and cousins who are women of means and of what is generally known as education. Their husbands

are men of affairs, strong, fine, intellectual men, and by rights their children have a fine inheritance both of brain power and will power, but they are as absolutely ignorant of what is most needed by little children and how to understand them as if they had all been born and brought up in the heart of Africa. I need all the help you can give me."

It was because of this Russian woman's plea for help, the letters and the urgent requests from my mothers, that my first book, *A Study of Child Nature*, was written. I felt impelled to continue my efforts to interest intelligent mothers in the importance of studying their children's spiritual life as well as their physical condition, proper clothing and good manners. For, important as were these in the eyes of most mothers with whom I was associated, I knew that there were deeper and more far-reaching subjects to be studied, and, if possible mastered. I had learned that good health does not depend entirely upon proper bathing, right nutrition, regular elimination of waste tissue, and physical exercise, but it depends also on right emotional conditions. I had learned that a happy child willingly accepts his morning bath as a matter of course, eats his simple food without questioning, and in consequence digests it normally; then he is ready for wholesome bodily activity. I had also slowly learned that the priceless value of physical activity is enhanced threefold by personal interest in the activity. Again, I learned, partly from my early and continuous contact with little children, and partly from my kindergarten experience and study of Froebel's deep and tender thought, that children are much more rational when appealed to in an impersonal way than when they are coaxed. They quickly learn how absurd many a selfish or capricious deed appears when they are shown what would be the result if all children wanted to do the same. In other words, the emotional, volitional, and intellectual life of a child are strong factors in the upbuilding of his health, a right use of his

activities and a forming of good manners; for this last factor always comes as a result of due consideration of or respect for the rights of others.

Much of the above is now commonly accepted by intelligent adults. But at the time of which I am writing it was new to me and evidently new to the hundreds of my mothers whom I tried in my inadequate way to teach by means of every-day illustrations of the life about us. And this was the urge within me that uttered itself in my first book.

CHAPTER XVIII

Story Writing

MY book *A Study of Child Nature* was printed in December, 1890. McClurg and other publishers declined to take the risk of publishing an educational book so unlike the popular text-books. Consequently, Mrs. Crouse and I decided to publish it privately. In three months after it came out fifteen hundred copies had been sold, and kindly recognition was given it by the press throughout the country. Many private letters poured in from near and far, even from across the seas. Churchmen of every denomination, heads of many educational centers, editors of leading papers, and men and women prominent in the literary field all gave the little book a friendly welcome. The chapter on "Punishment" attracted more attention than any other chapter in the book. I received letters on this subject from every direction, both in this country and abroad. Even to this day I receive letters asking how this or that misdeed should be met.

The following review from the *Christian Register*, in 1904, gives something of the unique reaction the Orient made to some parts of my publication:

Miss Elizabeth Harrison, the well-known kindergartner of Chicago, has had the good fortune to meet appreciation not only in her own country, but in other lands. Her *Study of Child Nature*, intended primarily as a text-book for kindergarten teachers, has been widely translated. In Japan it has become a home classic among numbers of eagerly progressive Japanese mothers and child students. Translated into Bulgarian it is studied by the theological students of the Presbyterian Mission. Still another translation is used in the mission school at Jerusalem. The book has gone to Manila, Calcutta, and South Africa. The editor of the *Armenian Weekly Journal* published the chapters serially, heading them

"Letters from an American Lady," and, because of the widespread interest manifested in the book, the paper became a bi-weekly. However, when the chapter on "Punishment" was reached, in which Miss Harrison makes a plea for natural and judicial rather than retributory punishment, the unfortunate editor was officially warned that the publication of the letters must cease. The sultan was unwilling for his subjects to imbibe "American ideas of justice." The book was later translated into Armenian as a whole, the translator spending a year in the United States for that purpose; and it has now a wide circulation there.

I insert here a letter from a personal friend, one whose life work we all hold in reverence:

Evanston, Ill.
June 8, 1891.

My dear Sister and Friend:

I feel sure that the book you have sent me is the one that ought to have a wide circulation, because it puts in a clear and pointed way what woman can appreciate and has the attractiveness of style and appearance that will cause them to go on after they have begun reading. It is the ablest work on the most significant subject that has yet come to my table.

I remember with what eagerness mother was wont to read and study every book that came into her hands relative to the training of children. But she never had a book like this, and much as I owe to her, I can but think it would have been better for me, if one so earnest as she was had known by heart, as she surely would have done had it come under her observation, page 207 of this marvelous little treatise.

I am yours,

FRANCES WILLARD.

Below is a message that came from an unknown source, through the mail, soon after the publication of my *Study of Child Nature*. It was the first recognition assuring me that I had gained some insight into the "eternal verities."

Oh author! Why were not you and your kind born immortal? The longest allotment of life is such scanty time for giving of all that is in you, that which so adequately answers the world's great needs.

Letters that I received requesting information as to the sources of my mythical stories in *In Storyland* caused me to realize that there was a lack of understanding of what philologists call paramyths, or myths consciously created. We are, of course, familiar with the fact that the old Greek, Norse, Teutonic and other child-races created their myths from observation of nature and their experiences in life's emotions, in order to express their belief that a spiritual power or powers existed in all phenomena of life. All mythology is an endeavor to understand the unseen creative force of the universe, by embodying the same in gods and goddesses in sculptured forms, in legendary stories, or in symbolic rites.

This interpreting of the seen by the unseen inspired the art of all early races. It has been termed "The far-off voice of nations calling after God." With the gradual advance of the reasoning power of mankind, there has come into the world a belief in one infinitely great creative power whom we call God. Since the Divine is too great to be represented by sense-perceived forms, the ancient myths no longer serve to express the invisible power that is manifest in nature and in the spiritual side of man's conscious life. Although artists and poets still refer to these gods and goddesses when speaking of the destructive emotions of anger, fear, jealousy, revenge, war, and victory or the protective emotions of love, domestic fidelity, chivalry, patriotism, religious exaltation, and the like, these destructive or protective emotions seem often to lie in the inherited instincts of racial ancestry, many times beyond human control. This is a vast subject, far beyond the limits of a chapter. Some of its most beautiful forms are still retained in the rituals and symbols of the Christian worship; as in baptism, the communion service, kneeling in prayer, the cross, anthems.

In writing my mythical stories, when I wished to describe certain experiences which I thought contained ideals that might be made attractive to children, without the dulling



The Present College at Evanston, Illinois, as Developed From Miss Harrison's Pioneering

effect of mere moralizing, I turned to the art form of the paramyth which would allow the child to accept the story simply as a fairy tale, or to feel something of its significance to the degree that he was ready for the teaching. In this way, stories may serve the child from five to ten years of age. Their deeper significance will come to the man or woman of culture. In fact, I have held the attention of audiences of eight hundred to a thousand adults, with one or another of these stories.

The sources of my stories came from my everyday experiences and observations in life, thrown by this means into what one might call poetic or universal form. For example, "Beta and the Lame Giant" is simply this symbolic way of telling how a man of genius who was sadly lacking in the ability to get along with other people was helped by one of his students to express himself. She saw the value of his thoughts and oftentimes removed the irritation or offense that his abrupt manners had created. To one child this story of little Beta means merely the story of a little girl who, wandering in the mountains of Wonderland, discovered a lame giant near the top of one of the mountains and befriended him. To another it may stir a feeling, dimly perhaps, of the beauty and power of helpfulness, even in small services; or to broader minds it may recall the fact that great men have limitations which must be overlooked if their greatness is to be recognized.

In "The Line of Golden Light," I told the story of the life of a friend of mine who had executive ability and a sense of responsibility to the extent of sacrificing much of the social pleasure of life and the many friendships which her organizing power could have brought to her. Her frequent exclamations, "They are so blind that they do not see the value of organized effort," suggested vividly to my mind the art form of little Avilla and her blind sister. Here again the child may be satisfied with the magic transformation of the story, or if

he is ready for it he can begin to feel the beauty of the self-sacrifice and service of little Avilla. The more thoughtful reader may see in the transformation of the ugly old witch into a beautiful and loving fairy princess the change that sometimes comes from contact with noble and unselfish characters.

In another story, the part which the "Little Gray Grandmother" played in leaving the magic mirror on the ground for the children to find, I make use of the mirror as a paramyth to represent conscience, rebuking the children for their misdeeds or approving of their right conduct. The story of "The Loving Cup" was suggested by the beauty of the conduct of a mother, who, though loving and tender, always required prompt obedience on the part of her son to the duty of the hour.

The story of "Prince Harweda" was inspired by an exactly opposite condition. The only son of wealthy parents was indulged in his every whim and caprice, until he was almost unendurable. A friend pointed out to his parents their mistake. The paramyth of the fairy godmother was in reality a thoughtful man who advised the parents to send the boy away to school. His advice was accepted, though somewhat unwillingly. The boy improved immensely and later fell in love with and married a young girl who returned his devotion, and his whole life was transformed. The description of the magic palace in this story came from the remembrance of a visit to the ballroom of the Palace of Versailles whose walls are alternate windows and mirrors. I once gave a description of this room to an old-fashioned missionary who had spent most of her life among very ignorant people. She exclaimed, "That's just like life; you can spend your time looking at yourself, or you can spend it looking at God's great beautiful world outside!" Instantly the symbol for Harweda's little pink palace, for which I was hunting, flashed across my mind.

The story of "Little Blessed Eyes" was of a dear young mother who taught her children to enjoy the beauties of nature and the good in humanity. "The Great White City" was suggested by the master mind of John W. Root who persuaded the artists, sculptors, architects, decorators, and landscape gardeners who were the builders of the World's Fair at Chicago, each to sacrifice details in his design which would prove in any way inharmonious to the whole. This suggested to me the opportunity to show the beauty of true leadership which recognizes the best that is in each co-worker. And yet to the younger children this was merely another fairy tale. "Hans and the Four Giants" is so self-evident that it hardly needs an explanation. I had an appointment with the managing editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. Feeling that his time was more valuable than mine, I arrived at his office shortly before the appointed hour. While waiting for his coming I noticed that a shaded electric light hung over his desk, a telephone hung beside it, and a railroad time-table lay upon the desk. While I was looking at these objects, a wire basket came whizzing in through the transom and stopped just above the desk. The office boy took from it several clippings and one or two written slips of paper and laid them on the desk. With a touch of his hand he sent the basket whizzing back from whence it came. Instantly I realized that I had before me a modern illustration of the ancient myth of giants and genii who could see so far, hear so well, run so fast, and could extend an arm to any desirable distance. Yet to a little child it was only a wonder-tale.

I have taken the space to explain these details, because I feel the importance of meeting and nurturing the demands of children's imagination, as well as their sense-perception and material activities. For out of the imagination have grown all the art and poetry and almost all the sympathy which the spiritual side of life makes beautiful and real. If we tell to a child merely sense-perceived stories we leave him within the

narrow bounds of concrete experiences. The great "might be" is left out. I added to these original stories one of the old myths which has come down to us from Homer's *Odyssey* and one of the marvelous symbolic stories from the greatest art expression of the medieval ages, Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The hero stories need no explanation other than that they are arranged in order of the degree of sacrifice made, from the loss of mere physical comfort, to the sacrifice of life itself, or what I sometimes think is greater, unnoticed, unrequited toil.

In order that we may better understand the significance with which the true genius deals with the myth-making element of the human mind, let us remember that,

"Without a parable spake not the Master to the multitude."

If we look at the world of nature aright,

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

If we look at human life aright, we know that

"Now we see through a glass darkly."

But that far more exceeding glory lies in each experience if we interpret it aright.

Thus it will be seen that *In Storyland*¹ wrote itself. There are no old letters telling of faint heart and weariness of spirit, from which to recall days of discouragement. Only happy memories are connected with my story writing. The stories grew out of my association with life, as *Study of Child Nature* had grown out of my lectures in my first mothers' classes. The book took form after much testing of the stories before audiences of adults and in telling them to children as individuals and in groups. I have, from the first, felt that the art form and the universal truths which have made these tales safe for the present will make them safe for the future.

¹The book has been reprinted in England and in Japan and is used in connection with educational work in these countries.

Soon after our second Dante School I chanced to stay over-night at the home of a friend, who with her mother had attended the thirty-six preliminary lectures on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, as well as every session of the Literary School, which, that year, was concentrated on Dante, the second world poet, or the poet of Christianity. At the twilight hour, the little four-year-old daughter of my friend, climbed into my lap, and after settling herself comfortably said, "Well, now tell me about Dante. Mamma and grandmother talk so much about Dante and I don't know what it is. So now you must tell me a story about it." I was somewhat surprised by the request, and said, "I am afraid you are not old enough to understand the story if I were to tell it to you." "Yes I am; I am four years old. Mamma says she loves to read Dante, and I know I'll love it too. Please tell it to me."

The child's perfect faith in my ability to explain anything that she wanted to know was too precious to be set aside. After a few moments of mental review of the masterpiece, I selected the incident of the resting of Dante and Virgil over-night in "The Valley of the Princes," and lightly sketched it, emphasizing the beauty of the valley and the protecting care of the angels, telling her first that Dante was the name of a man who wrote a wonderful poem, just as Edmond Fible was the name of her grandfather, who wrote letters to her mother. The story itself was less than ten minutes in telling. When it ended, with a sigh of satisfaction she said, "Now I know about Dante." She then gave me a kiss along with her thanks, as a reward, and slipping down from my lap was soon playing with her doll.

The next week I met the child's mother, and she told me that her little daughter had asked to have the story repeated again and again. She then added, "You ought to write that story as you gave it to her while it is fresh in your mind."

Some months after this I was in Brooklyn, to plead before the Superintendent's Department of the National Education

Association for a recommendation that the kindergarten be put into our public schools. It was my first appearance before that august body, and as I was still a novice in public speaking, I was very nervous over possible failure in convincing these representative executives. The night before the ordeal I found myself restless and unable to sleep. I reached out for my note-book and pencil, which I always kept near me, and wrote out "The Vision of Dante," in very nearly the form that it now appears in the later volumes of *In Storyland*. On my return to Chicago, I told the story in its revised form to a class of young mothers, and asked them to try telling it to their children, as I desired to know whether the world's great literature could be made interesting to children. As a result I had many encouraging reports. One seven-year-old boy asked for the story so often that he committed it to memory.

Part of this result may have been due to the mother's interest in the story which would inevitably show itself in her tone of voice, and her perceptible effort toward making a favorable impression. But through these experiments I was strengthened in my belief that if we live in intimate and friendly contact with children they will almost invariably learn to like what we like, provided, of course, that we have learned to be interested in what they like. Comradeship always means an interchange of interests.

The real test of the story came later, however, when one day I received a note from the president of the Chicago Woman's Club, which at that time met in the building in which we held our afternoon classes for kindergarten students. The note asked me, if possible, to come upstairs to the club room, as the writer wanted some help from me. I was giving a lesson in hand-work at the time, but I explained the request to the class and gave the necessary instruction to an assistant teacher and, somewhat puzzled went to the Woman's Club room. When I entered a member was on the floor speaking,



Alumni Room in the New College, Showing Miss Harrison's Desk in Which She Wrote Many Stories

and as soon as she had finished the president said, "Miss Harrison, we want you to tell us a story suitable for children from Dante's *Divine Comedy*." Still perplexed as to the request, I went forward, and asking my audience to transform themselves, for the time being, into children, I told the story as I had told it to the primary-grade children. When it was ended, a prominent member of the club rose and said, "I stand convinced. It can be done." The president smiled and thanked me for coming; still mystified, I returned to my classes. Later, I was told that there had arisen the question as to whether children under the adolescent period could be interested in anything of better literary merit than the school reader at that time in use. My experiment in telling a story from the *Divine Comedy* was spoken of and the club member above referred to had said that it would be impossible to interest a child in a subject so remote from his personal experience. The president who had heard me tell the story to a roomful of children, under ten years of age, replied that I was in the building, and possibly might come to them and tell some such story.

I have entered into these details, not to prove the merit of my stories, but to call attention to the fact that children *feel* the power of real literature, even when they but dimly understand it. I cannot forbear inserting a letter from a five-and-a-half-year-old boy, an entire stranger to me.

4123 Leidy Ave.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

My dear Miss Harrison,

Mother has read me your story "How Little Cedric Became a Knight" and I want to know if it is a true story.

I am only 5 years and a half old and I wonder if I am big enough to be one.

I am trying now to be a knight and would like to grow up like Cedric.

Yours truly,
WALTER CHEESMAN.

Years later, I received a letter from an eighteen-year-old boy, whom I had not seen since he was six years old. In the letter he said, "I have never forgotten the story of Cedric that you told me in my childhood." I give these two instances to show how children may be early impressed by stories, if they are well told. At another time I received a package of thirty-six letters from a fourth-grade room. In every letter was expressed a preference for "How Little Cedric Became a Knight," over all other stories of the year that had been told them. Then followed their original comments on why they liked the story.

Elsewhere in this book, I relate the story of a year of enforced rest in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Southern California. My outstanding experience of that year was realized in a rare opportunity to study a little girl and her brother, aged four and six years, in their native mountain environment. My *Two Children of the Foothills* tells this story which grew into a book two years after my return to my work in Chicago. It has been translated into the Japanese and Swedish languages. It is used as a text book in Japan, under the much more attractive title, *Two Little Children of the Mountain Top*. I was immensely pleased by a note from Sweden, asking permission to reprint this simple story in the Swedish language.

*The Unseen Side of Child Life*² was written in 1920, after I resigned the presidency of National Kindergarten and Elementary College on account of my ill health.

My books written between the years 1900 and 1921 have been well received by the educational world. All of my books, with the exception of *In Storyland*, have been written along educational lines, taking up from time to time the various phases of the ever-increasing problem of better homes, better schools and happier childhood.

²*The Unseen Side of Child Life* and *A Study of Child Nature* have recently been translated into the Russian language.

CHAPTER XIX

A Vision of the Yet-to-Be

FROM my "little hillock" I wish to sketch some of the important changes that have influenced the advance in education during my forty-one years of active work as a co-laborer in the field. My own contribution has been the spreading of the ideal that true education is self-activity, and that this self-activity should begin in the *pre-school age in the home*, leading into all later creative work. My chief means of giving my message to the world has been my books, my lectures before national and international organizations, my training work with mothers numbering more than five thousand in and around Chicago, and thirty-five years of training teachers. My great aim in all my normal work was to help the student to interpret human development from finite and temporary objectives into the world of infinite laws, and thus be able to lead the little child from physical activities into the world of imagination.

During the early years of awakening, we were all groping our way toward the fundamentals of the new education. So new and so fascinating was it that its details often blinded us to the central thought of what education ought to be. The new ideal was difficult to grasp, as most of us had been taught to consider the giving of information on the part of the teacher, and the docile reception of it on the part of the pupil, to be the technic of teaching; whereas the profound conception of education—gleams of which may be found in the writings of all great educators, from Homer, down through the ages—is self-activity.

This basic thought is that the *creative self-activity* of the child, aroused by his personal experience and his contacts with

the experiences of other children, together with his wonder-world of exhaustless imagination shared in common with his comrades, leads to some comprehension of the unity of the human race.¹

The kindergarten was the first organized effort to lead the child to *creative activity*, to "learn by doing." However, there soon followed in the organized elementary-school work of America hopeful adaptations of the kindergarten materials and methods. Such marvelous changes in school-room appointments and methods of teaching have now been worked out, with added enrichment of materials, that we look back with tender amusement at our blunders and futile experiments. Let us briefly review some of these changes. In the last quarter of a century the dull repetition of the words of the text book has changed into topical study and individual research, even in the primary grades; listless lolling between recitation periods has been quickened into manual expression of the children's interests. Lock-step drill for young children who needed the varied exercise of every muscle has given place to dancing games and rhythmic play. The rough scuffling on the playground is being transformed through sliding boards, swings and trapezes, into joyous mastery of muscles and conquest of timidity.

Still more important is the change in our psychological viewpoint. Children are no longer looked upon as identical but rather as growing personalities, whose emotions are to be understood and wisely developed, whose will-power is strengthened by the frequency that it is called upon to choose and to act, whose intellect is fed by experience, whose imagination is nurtured by song and verse, folk lore and fairy tale,

¹The first practical effort to apply this ideal to the school-room may be traced to Comenius, who at great expense issued the first illustrated school book. Pestalozzi developed this idea with his emphasis on the importance of sense-perception of real objects. Next came Froebel, showing more clearly still, that the great law of human development included not only the child's keener observation of the world about him, and his participation in its activities, but it meant also the necessity for group or community life; giving and taking or serving and receiving service with equal joy, in order that the feeling of *the unity of the human race* might gradually lead to a comprehension of true religion.



Harrison Hall, Evanston, Illinois

until art, the messenger of the gods, sends signals of its approach.

The school itself is changing from a forlorn bareness into clean, sun-filled rooms, with growing plants and pleasing pictures, with work tables and play space, with piano and oftentimes half a dozen other musical instruments, with glass cases for "specimens" and cabinets for "collections," and frequently a play yard in which is a garden to be tended and animals to be cared for. It is a child-world instead of a prison in which children are confined so many hours each day. Yet who is there among us who can truthfully say that we have achieved that deepest of all insight, the right understanding of the soul of a child, who can boast that he or she has attained unto that most satisfying of all arts, perfect teaching? The artist teacher is as rare as the great musician or the master poet.

The increasing insistence of the rapidly changing ideals of our early days necessitated a more definite training of teachers, thereby adding to and enriching individual lives. There arose national, state, county, and town teachers' associations; university and college extension courses and summer schools; the study of group instinct as expressed in gangs, this last resulting in juvenile courts. Then came the Boy Scouts, Camp-fire Girls, summer camps and other like organizations; by means of which the leaders could come in intimate contact with the everyday life of the children in their charge. Many more phases of progress have joined the onward march of the new education.

One could not attend the meetings of the great National Education Association year after year and not become interested in the freeing of our people from the narrow idea that the imparting of information was all that was necessary in education. Books followed, one after another, on the new phases of education which were engaging the thought of earnest teachers throughout the country. Books on Hegel and Herbart, books on manual training, trade schools, the Gary

system, school gardens, school playgrounds and other out-of-door activities; school journals and magazines; and in addition a vast amount of literature covering the educational field, printed and distributed by the United States Bureau of Education. All have helped the forward move of the great cause. A review of the early years of strenuous activity brings back many a familiar personality, all of whom were earnest and honest seekers after truth, seekers after the real needs of mankind, and yet few of them had touched upon the one vital center which made the kindergarten a real power, universally recognized now in all normal training schools in America and in the elementary grades—*creative self-activity*. But the march of progress goes on. Great national and international organizations have been formed for the better understanding of childhood.

Never before in the life of mankind has there been such a demand for intelligent leaders in childhood education. Organizations that were dreams of a few enthusiasts in the past generation, have become practical influential factors in the nation's life today. The National Congress of Parent-Teacher Associations is developing more intelligent mothers and teachers through its privileges, and has awakened many men to their responsibilities as fathers and comrades of their children. The Child Welfare movement has become a national concern, directed and guided by the Children's Bureau at Washington. Our National Bureau of Education is taking up important new lines; among them the Nursery-Kindergarten-Primary Department and the Mothers' Department, as distinct from what was formerly considered the only legitimate work of the Bureau, dissemination of facts concerning the technical and pedagogical activities of the elementary and advanced grades. Truly the era of childhood is near and with it a recognition of the rights of little children to be well born, and to have such care at the time of their entrance into this world, and guidance afterward, that they shall not have



—Photographs available through Kindergarten Elementary College
The National Kindergarten and Elementary College,
Evanston, Ill., Opens Its Doors

to go through life physically handicapped or spiritually blind.

But there are in the meantime some stern facts to face. We know that suitable food must be provided for all the children of the nation; that a child's right to fresh air and room in which to play is as important as are proper hygienic conditions for criminals or the protection of industries that cater to luxury and self-indulgence; that the greatest service a woman can give to her country is to nurture and foster the right activities of child life and see to it that the creative instincts of children shall function through creative materials with which may be worked out the impressions that constantly present themselves to the average normal child. We know that every child has a right to encouragement and sympathy, and to the exercise of his social instincts in the simple unconscious fashion that is natural to unspoiled children.

The work before us, with this ideal as guide is enormous, but the instrumentalities by which it will be accomplished are growing. The organizations to which I have alluded are composed of earnest and intelligent citizens, increasing numbers of women of our country who have shown their efficiency and determination to succeed by organizing state and local associations; while men with brains, active wills, and warm hearts are joining more and more in this great work.

However, the goal of the new education will not be reached until we convince the world that the proper feeding, bathing and dressing of infants, important as it is, is but a small fraction of the mother's work, not until we fully realize that our day nurseries squander hours each day during those precious years between infancy and the kindergarten age which might be utilized in wholesome plays and baby activities which would awaken and guide the social instincts, or in games which would start children on their life-long training in the adjustment of the material world around them to their needs. We must recognize that, in most cases, the mothers'

pension law works better than the day nursery, realizing also that until the day of trained motherhood comes the day nurseries should be utilized for creating joy and comradeship as well as for preserving bodily health.

Our work will not be accomplished until all our public schools realize that the years between four and six are priceless for the education of a child in the simple, normal beginnings of transition from the purely individualistic view, which is apt to condition the home life of most children, to the altruistic beginnings of adjustment to the social order. Not until the schools realize that these are the years when the language centers of the brain are most active and a child can acquire one or two languages with the same ease with which he learns his mother tongue, thus finding his place in world brotherhood.

The ideal will not be reached until we realize that these same passing years are deciding the young child's attitude toward life, awakening interest in surrounding objects, creating a love of cleanliness and beauty; not until we realize that creative spontaneous play is the most spiritual activity of life at this stage of his growth will the educational problem be answered. Not until we are convinced of the importance of these vital needs of childhood will we realize the greatness of our part in the work of conserving and reconstructing our own nation and the nations of the world, who are looking to us for their ideals. True democracy that will give to every man "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," can be attained only when the rights of childhood have been established, and the guardians of childhood are consecrated to their work.

However, we need not be pessimistic. I have high hopes for our race. I have firm faith in the old axiom: "Men may be ignoble, but man is noble." Long years of experience with little children, close, intimate, conferences with many earnest, intelligent mothers have convinced me that Froebel was right

when he said "a child who plays thoroughly with self-active determination, even persisting until physical fatigue comes, will be a thorough, determined man, capable of self-sacrifice for the promotion of the welfare of himself and others."

One of the chief joys of my life has been to watch the sweep forward from the idea of education as a formal acquisition of material facts and philosophic theories, to the more vital work of creative activity and the significance of community responsibility. Many mistakes have been made and are still being made, but the advance has been so great that it is enough to thrill the hearts of all lovers of childhood. Surely a great day is dawning, and as one sits in the shadow of accumulating years one believes that this vast awakening in education must check the greed for wealth which is weakening our nation, because we are supplied with something so much more important than material wealth,—and then one begins to understand these prophetic words: "*Nations yet unborn will look to America for help and inspiration.*"



San Antonio, Texas. Home Where Miss Harrison Wrote Her Autobiography



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